

KOMOTION



International

#3

## KOMOTION

BECAUSE WE CELEBRATE LIFE AND BATTLE  
BECAUSE WE ARE NOT SATISFIED  
BECAUSE IT IS UP TO US  
BECAUSE WE LOVE TO SING AND DANCE  
BECAUSE THE PRESSURE IS UPON US  
BECAUSE THERE ARE GOVERNMENTS AND  
BORDERS AND COPS AND COURTS  
BECAUSE THE BOUNDRIES MUST BE BROKEN  
BECAUSE WE ARE OUT OF CONTROL  
BECAUSE THEY SAID WE COULDN'T DO IT  
BECAUSE WE FEEL LIKE IT

### THINK TWICE (OR AT LEAST ONCE)

Robin Banks

2

### A SHORTER HISTORY (OF THE UNITED STATES)

Clarence Maybee

4

### THEORETICAL SCIENCE

T.S. Pushkin

5

411

Rain in the Face

9

### NEWZ 'N REVIEWZ

The Knocking Heads

8

### MY LAST TAG

Claude Palmer

10

### STRIP MINING

Celeste Conner

12

### ONCE UPON A TIME THERE WERE NATIONS

Margot Pepper

14

### RECORD RANTS

Orfeo

15



Good Boys/ Bad Boys by Richard Olsen



**JULY 14**

Steven La Voie

**16**

**DANNIE RICHMOND**

Guy Ashley

**18**

**CRACKED MIRROR OF PREJUDICE**

Annika Kahn

**22**

**LETTER FROM MEXICO**

Margot Pepper

**30**

**FROM JAIL THRU RAGE**

Arnold O

**32**

**FILM REVIEW: MAPANTSULA**

Margot Pepper

**38**

**BOOK REVIEW: HOMAGE TO CATALONIA**

Sandy Pleasants

**39**

**FREE FOR ALL**

**40**

**KOMOTION KATALOG**

**41**

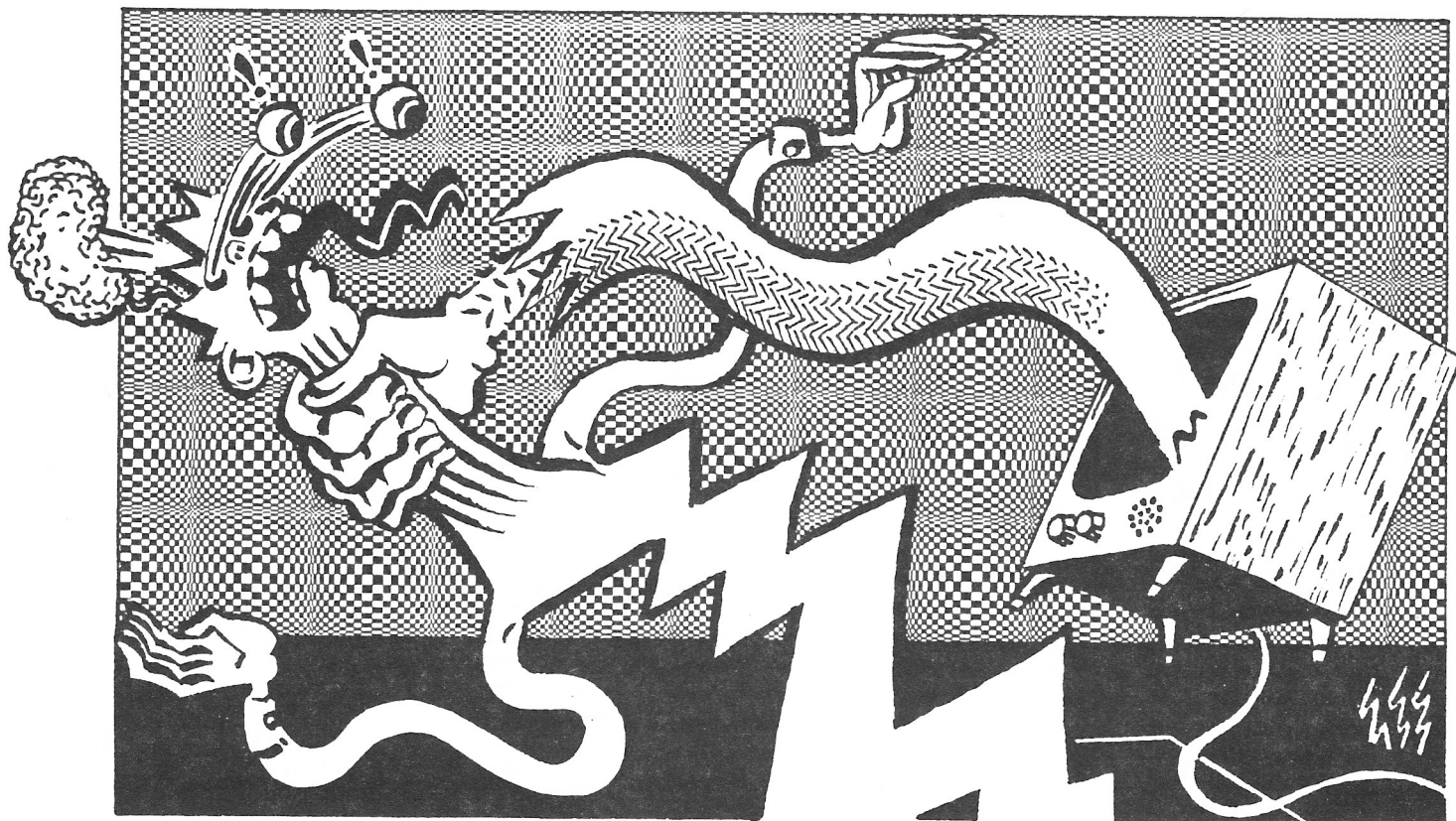
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**Komotion International** is an artist's collective. We welcome all submissions, letters, and inquiries at P.O. Box 410502, San Francisco, CA 94141-0502.

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The artworks by **Richard Olsen** in this issue are from his series "Power and Violence at a Day Treatment Center."





## Think Twice (or at least once)

I learned about U.S. history by watching *Firewalker*, in which Chuck Norris travels on a long, dangerous journey against the evil, barbaric Indian who wants to cut the heart out of Chuck's white woman. But with the *help* of Chuck's black friend they kill the Indian and get his gold, becoming instant millionaires. "Manifest destiny," isn't it?

I learned how to be a woman from *The Snake Pit*, (1938), which equates female independence with psychosis and insanity, and establishes that "the truly healthy woman is one who responds passively to male energy, accepting dependence upon the male to achieve the final goal of sexual life - impregnation." As a woman I also learned that intellectualism betrays femininity, as do worldly achievements, which are actually symptoms of neurotic dissatisfaction with our ordained lot.

I learned about arrogant coloreds and their lustful, raping ways from *The Birth of a Nation*. But by WWII, I learned that "racial tolerance was necessary to a unified military effort," from *The Negro Soldier*, a film collaboration between Hollywood and the U.S. Army.

I learned about the Middle East by seeing Sammy Hagar destroy an effigy of Khomeini on stage, and hearing Sam Kinison rave about dirty Arabs.

I learned about faggots from Guns and Roses' songs; I know more about guns and violence from watching TV than you'd ever want to know. I've learned about money, power, what I want and who I am...

American "education" aside, *I have learned!*

Scholars such as Noam Chomsky, Michel Foucault and psychologist Wilhelm Reich have written extensively about how "democratic" societies rely on ideology and indoctrination for control. When you take into account the dismal state of education in this country, that millions of adults can't even read, and the fact that the majority of Americans believe television to be the most credible news source, it's easy to see the persuasive power of mass-media. And since WWII, commercial mass-media has become ubiquitous. In a survey taken in 1973, "the average American by the age of 18 will stockpile nearly 17,000 hours of viewing experience and will watch at least 20 movies for every book he reads. Eventually, the viewing will absorb 10 years of his life." Because we learn history through indirect experience and by the prefabricated interpretation of the mass media, one could argue that the reporting of history through TV and film has actually replaced history itself!

Hitler and Goebbels were the first great manipulators of mass-media and masters of modern spectacle. Nazi propaganda films created their own reality, carefully editing events and images to depict themselves exactly as they wanted to be seen. In the words of Siegfried Kracauer, Goebbels "defined modern political propaganda as a creative art, thereby implying that he considered it an autonomous power rather than a subordinate instrument. ...he rejected 'power based on guns,' because power that fails to invade and conquer the soul is faced with ever impending revolution. Goebbels' propaganda, not content with forcing the Nazi system upon the people, endeavored to force

the heart of the people into this system - and to keep it there. ...reality was put to work faking itself, and exhausted minds were not even permitted to dream any longer."

In Reich's book, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, he comments, "Hitler repeatedly stressed that one could not get at the masses with arguments, proofs, and knowledge, but only with feelings and beliefs." (p. 83) Almost fifty years later, this statement crystalizes the psychology used by Ronald Reagan, the "Great Communicator." Reagan's rhetoric was so effective that the very people to be most hurt by his policies were the ones who voted him in. The scariest thing is that they *continued* to support him while unions, renters, workers, and the poor were getting kicked in the teeth and the "already" rich made millions more.

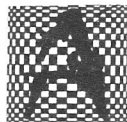
But for all the reactionary uses of mass-media, there have also existed as many progressive ones. Since its beginning, Hollywood has had such liberal tendencies that it even provoked overt suppression by the government. (How thin, our veil of civil rights!) During the cold-war fifties, a vicious anti-Communist campaign was created to scare, blacklist and jail many actors, writers and directors. The power of film had certainly been recognized and the government considered Hollywood's populist views a threat. So successful was their attack, spear-headed by the House Un-American Activities Committee, that even organizations like the ACLU shied away from defending the supposed Communists.



By the sixties and seventies, however, the whole thing had blown wide open. Fueled by the Free Speech Movement and Vietnam war protests, Hollywood unleashed such films as *Dr. Strangelove*, one of the most vicious attacks on cold war attitudes, modern warfare, and the U.S. government itself. From *Little Big Man* and *Easy Rider*, to *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *All the President's Men*, history was again represented, but from the perspective of cultural and political upheaval. Although Chomsky would argue that allowing these dissenting views in mass culture is actually an *apparatus* of control, it can't be denied that such films have deeply affected attitudes about racism and social mores, and have helped create a society that not only believes the government could lie and be corrupt - but assumes it!

But 'political' Hollywood began to stall by the late seventies. "For although Hollywood's present distress is closely related to the challenge of cable television (and video games,) it is equally tied to the fragmentation of American society in the 80's..." (Cagin, p. xii) As technology accelerates so does alienation, and for a generation that has been fed a constant diet of TV and movies (without any of the real-life adventure of the sixties and early seventies,) fantasy and reality are becoming confused and inextricably imbedded in each other.

Life itself is desperately trying to capture the excitement of the big screen, and there's no better example of this than the crack gangs and their Clint Eastwood "Wild, Wild West" ways. For ghetto blacks who have nothing and no hope of ever getting anything, the gangs provide excitement, drama, pride, comradeship, money, girls, power, status, a reason to live... and die. Life is an action flick, those bullets aren't real - or are they? Besides, who would rather flip burgers for minimum wage and be doomed to a living death?



As we surge towards the end of the century, and the entire world seems to be moving towards "democratic" institutions, alternative ideas will be suppressed through even more sophisticated (i.e. invisible) means. The media's glut of information is intensifying, overstimulating a population who can no longer feel tragedy or joy. Resources are also becoming more restricted. (Sure; you can make a movie about anything you want - just go raise a million dollars. Sure, you can make a record - just try to get it distributed.) These methods of censorship have proven highly effective, and will probably be expanded upon in the 21st century.

But there isn't cause to be completely cynical, yet! After all, there is no all-powerful Big Brother controlling everything we think and do. Culture is *still* a battleground of ideas and attitudes. And although the future seems to hold nothing but horror--with the government's increased ability to control and monitor the population, vastly increased military destructive capabilities, etc.

Here's a final statement from Wilhelm Reich, who, even after being exiled from several Communist countries, only to be discredited, jailed and ultimately killed by the U.S., was one of the most hopeful human beings: "The principal weapon in the arsenal of freedom is each new generation's tremendous urge to be free. The possibility of social freedom rests essentially upon this weapon and not upon anything else." Yeah!

Robin Banks

\* \* \* \* \*

Here's a list of books where I stole most of these ideas--you might want to steal a few of your own...

Cagin, Seth, *Hollywood Films of the Seventies*, Harper and Row, 1984.

Kracauer, Siegfried, *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of German Film*, Princeton University Press, 1947.

Miller, Randall, *Ethnic Images in American Film and Television*, The Balch Institute, 1978.

Reich, Wilhelm, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, Doubleday.

Rollins, Peter C., *Hollywood as Historian*, University Press of Kentucky, 1983.

Short, K.R.M., *Feature Films as History*, The University of Tennessee Press, 1981.

Smith, Paul, *The Historian and Film*, Cambridge University Press, 1976.



# A Shorter History

(OF THE UNITED STATES)

The early Greeks  
did speak English.  
The fact that  
they do not  
speak English now  
is a complexity,  
but of course  
the early Greeks  
did speak English.

This must be  
intuitively  
accepted.

The English  
speaking Greeks  
did develop  
in the sciences  
and the arts.  
They did also  
enjoy creation.

The early Greeks  
discovered thinking  
and pondered this.  
Categories were devised  
and things were  
placed into them.  
Birds  
were captured  
and studied  
and told  
how to behave.

The early Greeks  
were known to have  
loved each other--  
the men  
loving the men  
and the women  
loving the women.  
It is unclear  
how this practice began,  
but it is simple to see  
that when one  
group indulged  
the other was  
forced to follow.

The English  
spoke English too.  
The English also wrote  
in English.

In fact,  
they were vehement  
about this fact.

One day they  
sailed to America  
in great ships  
made out of wood.

The Americans  
spoke English too.  
They did not notice  
that there were people  
already living in America  
and so they  
built homes  
on top of them.

The Americans brought  
Africans over  
to America  
because they knew  
that one day  
these Africans would  
teach them things  
that they didn't  
already know.

The Americans  
wrote letters about  
all of this  
and mailed them  
back to England.

The Queen of England  
was always Queen  
of all  
English speaking countries.

As time continued  
the English  
speaking Americans  
emulated the English  
speaking Greeks...

*Clarence Maybee*

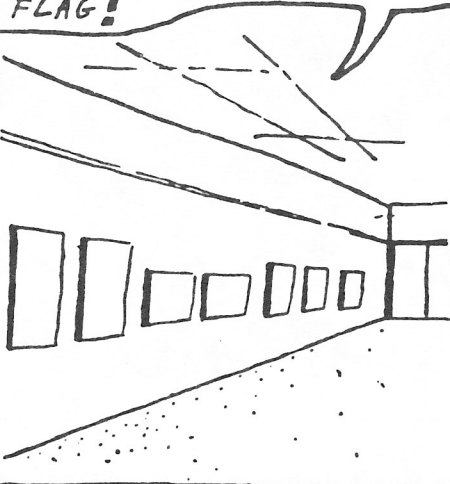
# Theoretical Science

by

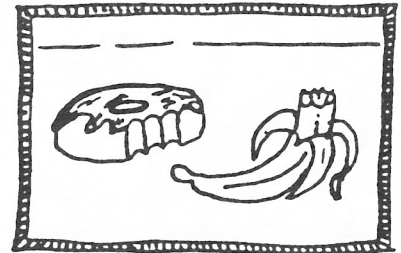
Thoreau  
Spinoza  
Pushkin

"Good taste is senseless." Rose

HEY LOOK AT THIS ONE, SENATOR... THE VIRGIN MARY GETTING AN ABORTION ON THE AMERICAN FLAG!



MY GOD, SPITTLECUP. WHAT DISCUSTING, FILTHY, DEPRAVED, SADISTIC, DRUGGED OUT MIND COULD DREAM UP SUCH OBSCENITY?



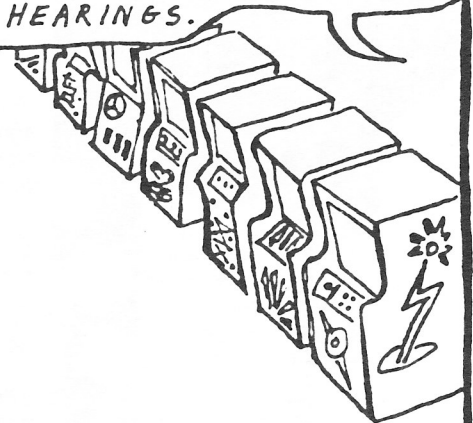
YES SIR, I DO BELIEVE THEY CALL IT ARTISTIC LICENSE.



AN INTERESTING THOUGHT SPITTLECUP. I'LL DRAFT LEGISLATION IMMEDIATELY TO REQUIRE ALL ARTISTS TO BUY LICENSES.



GREAT MOVE, SENATOR! AH... WE REALLY SHOULD BE RUNNING ALONG NOW OR WE'LL BE LATE TO THE DEFENSE PROCUREMENT HEARINGS.



OF COURSE, SPITTLECUP. WE MUST PROTECT THE "HEALTH OF THE STEALTH" AS IT WERE, HEH...HEH...



BY THE WAY, SIR, THIS CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION FROM THE TOBACCO GROWERS ASSOCIATION JUST ARRIVED....



THE BENIGNITY OF CONSTITUENT SERVICE. NOW LISTEN, WE'LL NEED B X 10 GLOSSIES OF ALL THOSE PORNOGRAPHIC OBSCENITIES FOR OUR... ER... FILES....





A lot of people don't like to think. Philosophy on a bumper sticker. Wisdom in a fortune cookie. Spin the wheel, guess a letter, figure out the phrase that pays. "Shit happens." "All that matters is bitches and money."

First of all, shit doesn't "happen." It takes an asshole to shit. There are so many assholes out there that there's plenty of shit, so much, in fact, that it's easy to lose sight of where it comes from. But why let the asshole off the hook? Why be one?!?

Second, as every successful gangster knows, this is a respectable business here! It's ladies, not bitches, OK? And accountants handle money. Men make DECISIONS. Got that? So lighten up fellas. There's a future for all you assholes working at one of our casinos. Say, in Beirut, for example.

What's so goofy about all this is that we're in the "information age." They could get the whole Library of Congress into a jukebox, and you can launch an ICBM from your laptop, given the proper codes. So with all this incredible knowledge around how come so many people are so ignorant?

And now we've got the "Genome Project." This is the plan to determine the complete base-pair sequence of human DNA. A gene is a complete unit of genetic information containing thousands of DNA molecules. Genes are contained in the chromosomes that your father and mother put together during what was, hopefully, an act of love. Taken as a whole they comprise the human genome--the basic unit of human identity. It is technologically feasible to carry out this task within a decade to fifteen years. Proponents argue that by deciphering this "code" all manner of genetic defects and diseases can be corrected and cured. (There are over 3000 diseases known to be genetically transmitted and identifying the exact location and nature of the "bad" DNA is part of what has led to both the initial success in fighting some of the effects of those diseases, and, also, to the conception of the Genome Project.)

Opponents argue that the costs are too high (approximately \$3 billion) and the risks too great. The basic point they make is that human society is not capable, at this time, of managing the information in the code, or the forces that knowing it will unleash. In other words, those in control of this information will deform and disfigure nature to a point where not only human life but, perhaps, all life could cease to be possible. It is the ultimate arrogance, playing at god. Frankenstein on a global scale.

studying a DNA profile at the agency's laboratory in Washington.

Rain in the Face

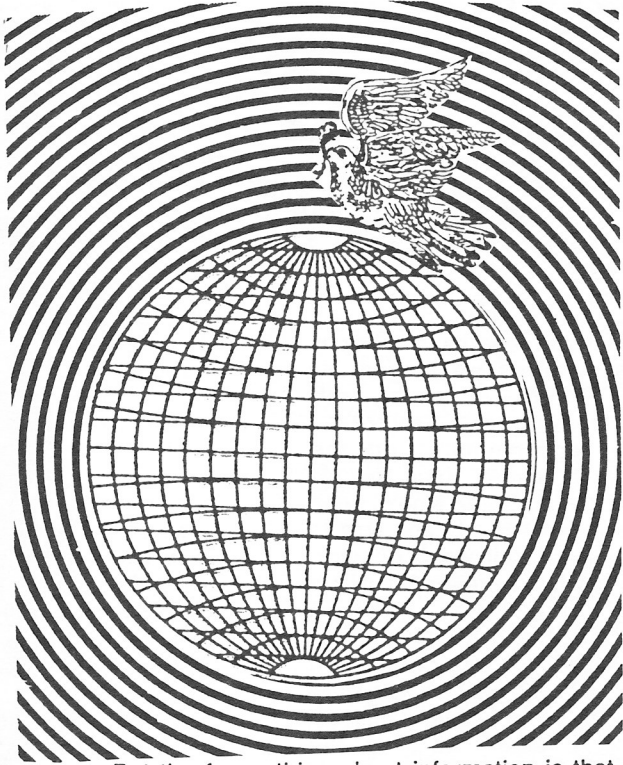
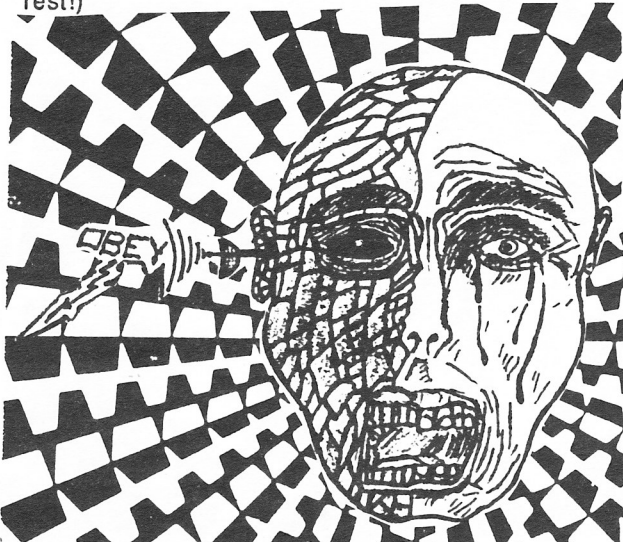
studying a DNA profile at the agency's laboratory in Washington.



I believe that the Genome Project will be undertaken and eventually completed (actually it's already begun but only in parts, not as a comprehensive effort) and that it is folly to oppose it. But it is even greater folly to think, to hope against hope, that this time they'll get it right, that this discovery will lead us to the promised land, heaven on earth, etc., as the computer, penicillin, the steam engine, the electric light, the automobile, the splitting of the atom, all major technological advances were supposed to do in their time. Because all previous experience has taught us that while discovery has alleviated the suffering of some, it has inflicted it on others. And on the balance sheet of history fewer have benefited than have suffered. The final victim could be life as we know it as the planet turns into an oven.

Furthermore, those who seek to know have found that information is not the equivalent of ideas. And in a society with a very unhealthy contempt for ideas, "information" frequently masquerades as wisdom. As a matter of fact, we are bombarded with so much information that we are overwhelmed and the same old prejudices and myths flourish in a hurricane of "facts". We end up with commonly held stereotypes, such as: rebels are ignoramuses with spirit, "born" to be wild; intellectuals are nerds with the knowledge spawning in test tubes, not in minds! More sinister is the perpetuation of the superiority of myths--racial, sexual, intellectual, now dressed up in pseudo-scientific, "genetic", mumbo-jumbo, so as to appear valid scientific conclusions.

Let's face it, some people like the way things are and want to keep it this way and others don't and want to change it. Those at the top of the dung heap want the information encoded in our genes. They will say they paid for it and so it is theirs, that the code to our identities is information they're entitled to, like our social security number, or our fingerprints. Perhaps they could use it to determine our relative worth as a worker, or as a person. Perhaps they could use it to clone an army of slaves, or achieve immortality! (Slavery and immortality have been the two things rulers have always sought, from the Pharaohs to the Presidents. Reagan's only got the Grecian Formula but he's working on the rest!)



But the funny thing about information is that it leaks out, like radiation, no matter how you try to contain it. And the ideas that it gives rise to are not inevitably rehashed dogma. Our politicians could be ruined by leaks of their own genetic defects. In fact, new ideas, new ways of thinking, emerge in discovery and thrive in diversity, especially when information is used as a tool, not treated as a possession for its own sake. One idea that's come from the theory of evolution is that the strong survive and who will be strong is predetermined by millions of years of adaptation. Sort of an industrial-age divine right. Another opposite idea is that without great variety there can be no life, that without many different forms there could be no form at all, that strength (success, health, whatever) cannot be measured by individual dominance or genetic purity. Rather, it must be measured by the vitality of the collective life of a society represented in part, by outstanding individuals, but more by the effective interaction of diverse groups, societies, etc., not by the quality of the genomes involved.

It is a fundamental impulse of human intelligence to unlock the secrets of the universe. But one of the secrets we need to reveal to ourselves is how to liberate our society from the assholes who would have us believe that "shit happens" and "all that matters is bitches and money". Maybe we are sinking back into the primordial ooze and I'm just too blind to see it. But I don't think so. I think the main battle to be fought now and through the 21st century will be over the education of the great majority of people. I believe that evolution demands that the potential of human intelligence be fulfilled not by an elite group of wise-men, intellectuals, priests and know-it-alls making property of knowledge but rather in the eradication of property by putting knowledge, and the tools to increase it, in the heads and hands of everybody.

# NEWS

## REVIEW

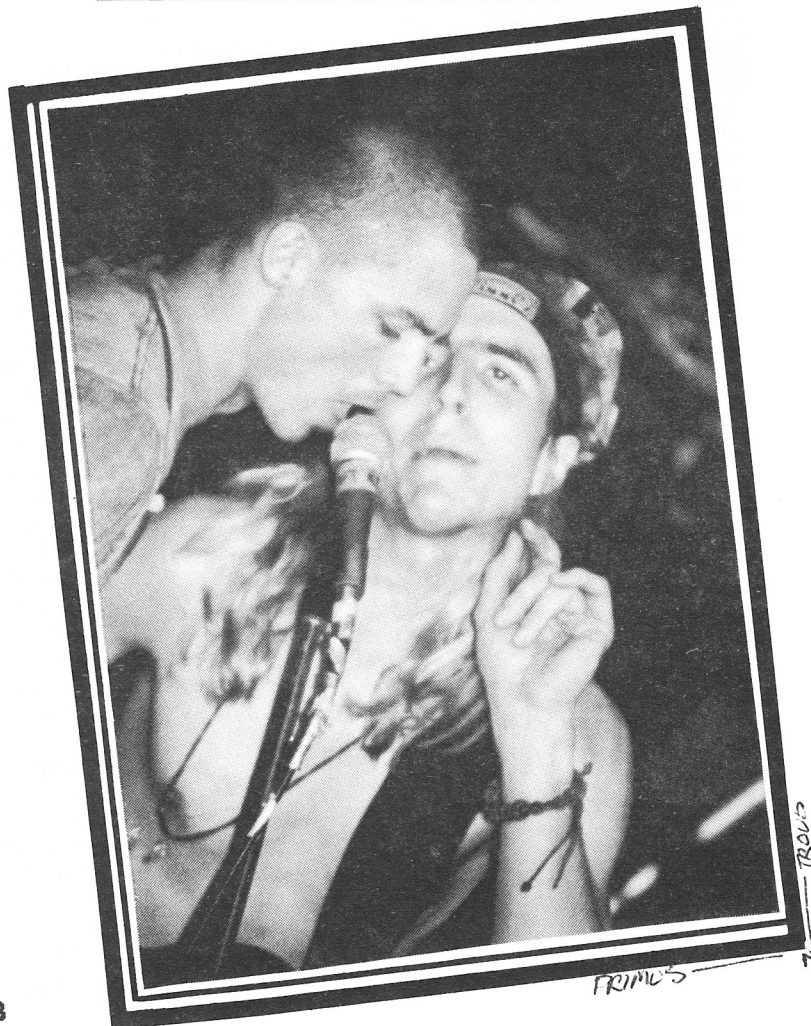
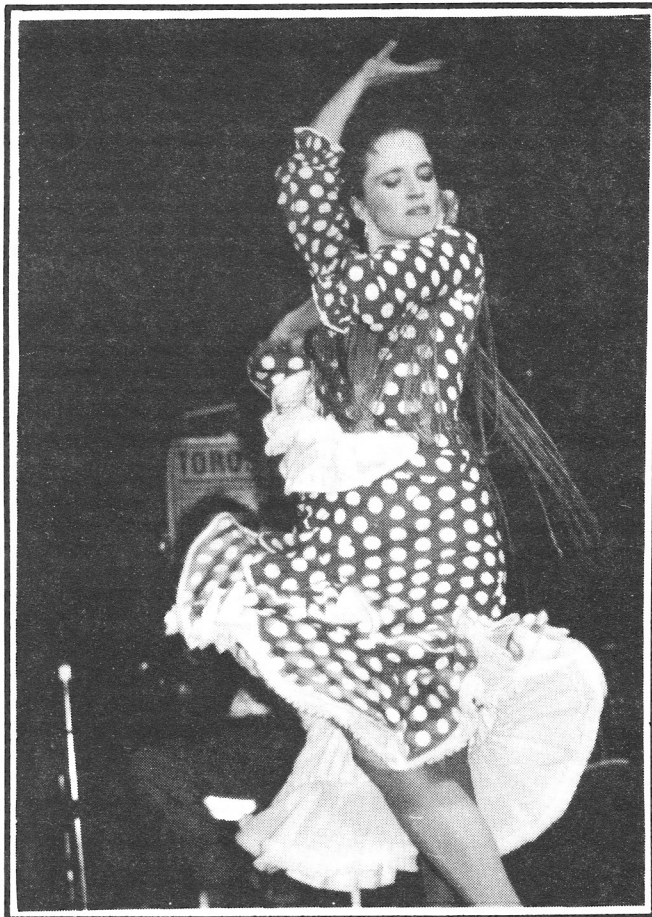
The knocking heads

From the depths of Craig Baldwin's archives we started out Komotion Pictures in January with "Hipster, Delinquent, Square," a fifties-style "documentary" on the American youth scene. Each lifestyle was played by an actor who'd been coached as to what to say and how to look by some off-Hollywood director. The square guy had a crew cut and kept grimacing like the guy in ERASERHEAD, trying to figure things out. The delinquent was right out of WEST SIDE STORY only he was white and didn't sing. The hipster came out with every "Beatnik" word in the existing vocabulary, and kept dragging his "chick" around grooving to the cool sounds of the Max Roach soundtrack, which gave a real authoritative feel to an otherwise hilarious view of the ways of youth at the time. Later, The Longshoremen played Komotion for the first time. This trio thrives on audience reaction, and didn't get quite enough to really blast them off. (Wake up people!) Frontman Dog delved into the arcane world of changing oil and the junkyard of human minimalism...er...why not? Jon Raskin of ROVA joined the Robert Haven Quartet to close a very "beat" night with some cutting and tender sax improvisation.

January '89 got off to a fiery start with the Flamenco music and dance of Mercedes Molina and Sangre Brava. A packed house oooed and ahhhed the spectacular dancing, clapped along with the performers in traditional Flamenco rhythms, and laughed heartily at stories of love and desire, *y gente muy chevere*. Bravo, Mercedes! (And if you missed them, look for a return performance before the end of the year.)

Although "Stupid Funk" can get pretty stupid sometimes, we got down with Primus, Fungo Mungo, Uhuru Maggot and Trouis. Skateboards and sweat managed to heat up this winter night pretty damn good. Only one young stage diver landed on his head, and when he came to he told us he was going into the army the next day. -Hey dude, I'd smash my head on the cement too ... only harder!

MERCEDES MOLINA AND SANGRE BRAVA





We had an end-of-the-month free admission, **Komotion Koffeehouse** on Jan. 25 with the added pleasure of good hot food from **Mondo Jim**, who has become Komotion's Universal MoFo guru of Komida Kulture. **Daisy Anarchy** read her "Daddy" & "Green River" works, causing some members of the audience to flinch from the intensity. She is serious in a lively/deadly way, possessing a unique balance between the street and pure cathartic (sic) exorcism. Go Tracy! Go Daisy! **Judith Abrams** read some fine, powerful work about Bill Evans & jamming with dogs at a country party. **Delia Makayama**, **Sonya Hunter**, and **Pat Fahey** were great. Delia read some good, personal pieces dealing with her roots. Sonia and Pat sang and played, Pat delivering a comedic piece based on mathematical chess kaballah, which is still perplexing a few scientists.

In the past Komotion has run artwork by **Sue Coe** and also reviewed her exhibit at the Art Institute. On Feb. 4 we showed "**Painted Landscapes of the Times**," a film about her work in New York. This was contrasted by "**Leon Golub**," another film about a very different New York artist. While both artists base their work on political events and newspaper

photos, their preoccupation with the theme of exploitation is mirrored quite differently in the environments they paint in. Sue's apartment/studio is small and dark, with a TV and her art materials mixed in with the other necessities of life. This is her palette to make a change in the world she sees. She takes a story, an incident, or an image and develops paintings to expound her vision. Here are the greed of the multi-national modern city-states, and the beliefs that cause Thatchers and Bothas to perpetrate and refine systems of civilized genocide with a happy face. Her creatures call for an end to terrorism while paying others to kill. We may not always know their names, but she shows us some of their faces.

**Leon Golub** finds his mercenary models in sports and news photographs and constructs his work with these models as guides. He works in a spacious, modern studio (probably not far from Sue's) and has interns assisting him. His process is complex, basically involving the coloring, covering, stripping down and re-scraping of paint and paper to

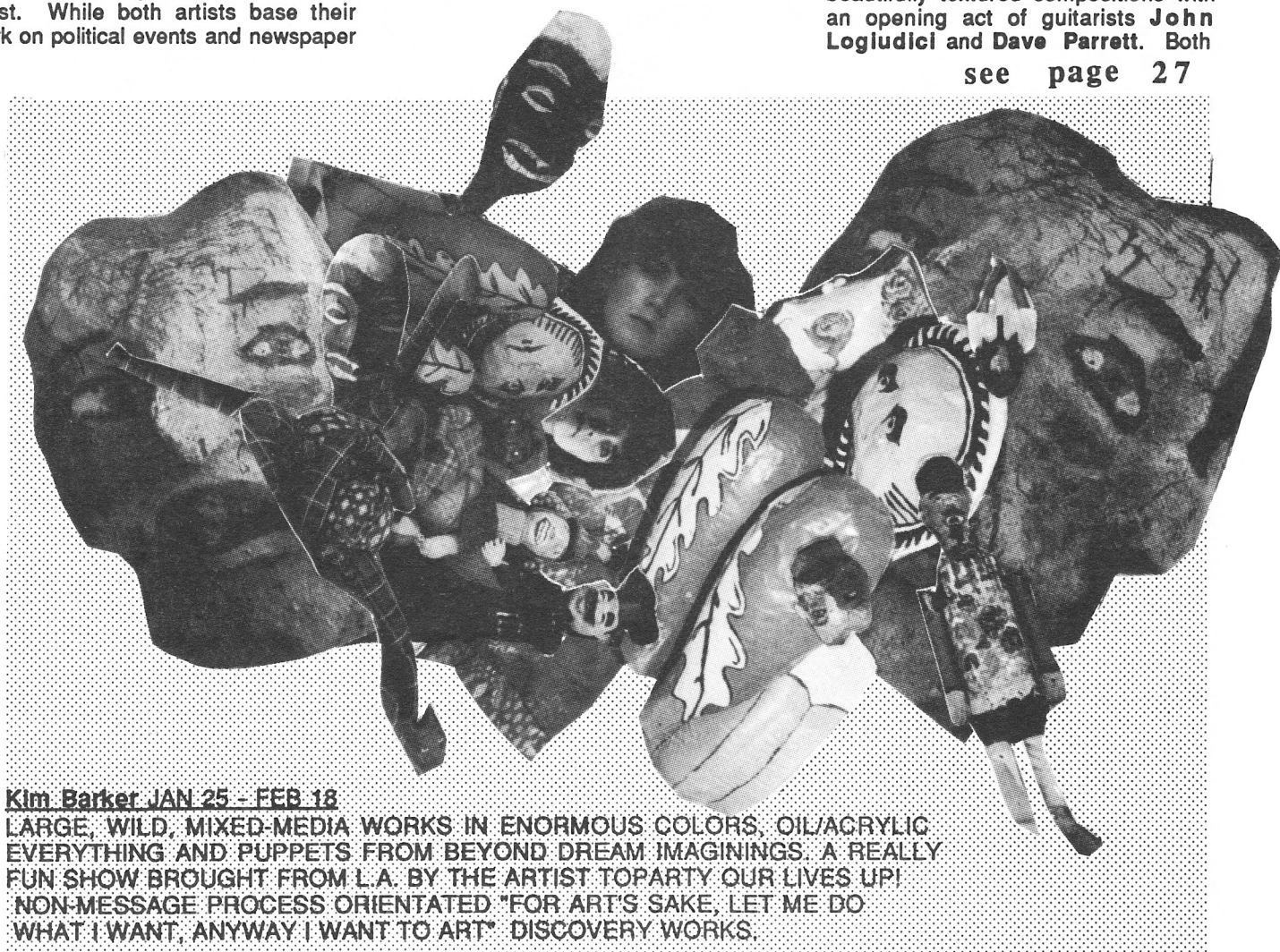
construct his scenes. His paintings are huge, his colors are often arresting pastels. The red flags imprinted with his name outside his museum shows are even bigger.

O.K. ! The music part of the night! **Bana Witt & Barabara Wire** broadcasting on all frequencies! A duo of electric & acoustic drum melody & Bana's odes to the politics of love & hate in the back seat and riding shotgun in an armored car with rhythm & the human heart as a compass! Bana sang of her NICO records being in a safe deposit box & later autographed her book- COMPASS IN AN ARMORED CAR (naturally.)

**The Blue Vulva Underground** closed the evening. Apparently an all-woman group, this is rock and roll at its sweaty core. Sample song "I wanna be menstruating!" shut down the Ramones in its unerring enthusiasm. Who wrote that blurb..."8 angry tits with instruments that play loud..." (There will be a short quiz, much much later...)

Another interesting evening in February was provided on the 8th by North Bay musician **Chris Coon**, who brought in an electronic ensemble of beautifully textured compositions with an opening act of guitarists **John Logiudici** and **Dave Parrett**. Both

see page 27



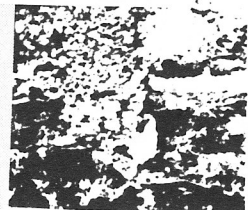
**Kim Barker JAN 25 - FEB 18**

LARGE, WILD, MIXED-MEDIA WORKS IN ENORMOUS COLORS, OIL/ACRYLIC EVERYTHING AND PUPPETS FROM BEYOND DREAM IMAGININGS. A REALLY FUN SHOW BROUGHT FROM L.A. BY THE ARTIST TOPARTY OUR LIVES UP! NON-MESSAGE PROCESS ORIENTATED "FOR ART'S SAKE, LET ME DO WHAT I WANT, ANYWAY I WANT TO ART" DISCOVERY WORKS.





Claude Palmer



*We might have given birth to a butterfly  
With the daily news  
Printed in blood on its wings*

Mina Loy



Out after midnight with my skateboard and a can of black spray paint in my coat. It is a slow night on Market Street. A brown structure near Duboce is my target: the back wall of a typewriter company which adjoins an empty parking lot. Earlier in the evening our President made a speech promising aid and weapons to the Contras and death squad states of Central America. There was very little about it in the news--no in-depth questioning, no critical evaluation. My question is short and simple: WHO BUYS REAGAN'S LIES?

12:20AM. I arrive at my spot and make two mistakes. First, I leave the skateboard where I can't reach it. Second, I begin the job without checking to see that I am unobserved. Figure I'll be quick and clean.

12:25AM. I'd only sprayed the letters WHO BUYS R when two strangers walking in opposite directions decide to stop me. Unfortunately for me they quickly make a citizen's arrest. One man is tall and lanky, apparently a Midwesterner by his accent. The other man is heavy-set and bear-like. Both are fired up with indignation.

"That's not right what you're doing..."

"Stop it! Stop Him!"

"Get his skateboard."

"OK, you get the paint..."

I continue to paint while they move in. This makes them angrier. The bear man seizes me from behind and pins me in a lock while the Midwest guy grabs the paint can. The skateboard is kicked away and flipped over out of my reach.

"Got 'im. Go call the police."

"Where's the phone?"

"Down at the laundromat! Tell 'em we caught him red-handed. Hurry up! Let's get it over with!"

"I'll hold him 'til you get back."

"If you try to get away, I'll pin you tighter. Vandalism really pisses me off!"

12:45AM. While Midwest is calling the police, Bear is making sure I don't get near the skateboard or the can of paint. I can't get out of Bear's arm lock. He is furiously denouncing those who would destroy things for a cause. Conveniently, I personify what is wrong with the tactics of "radical" groups and individuals.

"I know how you feel, I'm against Reagan too. But why damage innocent people's property? It just turns them against you. You may have a valid point, but you're using the wrong way to get your message across. We're teaching you a lesson. You'll think twice before you ever do it again."

12:50AM. Midwest is back. I haven't said much. We're waiting for the police to show up. I'm silently cursing my bad luck and idiocy. I'm sick because these two do-right, possibly gay, probably liberal bohunks are staunchly sticking up for the principles of private property. They want the police. I've been working at temp job for AT & T,

## *betraying a revolution,*

running an office on the 12th floor of Moscone Plaza for an ex-Oakland cop-turned-executive who believes that Dan White took an honorable course of action. But if I get busted I won't make it to work. I'll be in jail or have to get bailed out by family or roommates, neither of whom have the money. I don't have a lawyer. My crime was to get caught.

1:05AM. Bear's still got me. He and Midwest have concluded that people who spray paint buildings are committing a disservice to the credibility of progressive political groups. I've still said almost nothing in my defense, or about anything at all for that matter. I'm certainly not going to mention my involvement in the League of Urban Structural Terrorists (LUST) in which I am the founder and only member.

1:10AM. No police. Midwest grumbles and heads back to the laundromat for a second phone call to arms. Bear is wondering out loud about my motivations. He's cradling my skateboard under his arm like a newspaper.

"Why do you do this? I want to hear some kind of explanation. It's hard to comprehend why someone your age is still pulling adolescent stuff like this. Do you want to go to jail?"

I quickly put aside my embryonic ideology. I'm sweating, standing freely now. I want my skateboard and my paint. I want to get out of here and go home and be alone with the stars, or crawl into a bed with a warm body in it. Unfortunately, to bolt for it would entail the sacrifice of my beloved skateboard. Time is against me, unless I can bargain for my freedom with the right argument.

"Maybe we'll let you go if you promise to paint over the damage. What do you say? You give us your word, and your address and stuff, and the police won't even know this even happened ... speak up!"

*I feel as though I'm  
giving names to the enemy.*

I decide to play along. In my heart, as I pass along my vital statistics and swear on my honor, I feel as though I'm betraying a revolution, giving names to the enemy, singing like a fink canary, copping out, spilling the beans, giving up and going for broke. But I'm acting, saying I'm truly sorry, tomorrow I will clean up my aborted message to commuters and slaves. You have my word if I'm allowed to go free.

1:20AM. Midwest has returned once more. No police.

"They're sending someone over right away. In a squad car. What's going on? You gave him back his skateboard?"

"He's apologized. He's gonna clean it up tomorrow himself. Tell him what you told me."

I figure this is the three minutes before the cops really make it to the scene. "I'm frustrated," I hear myself say, "this is my vote, my weapon, my hammer, my billboard..." I'm on the verge of tears, tired of hanging around the parking lot. My throat sore, I ramble on... "my newspaper, my only platform in this inhumane bulldozer of corporate politics..."

I hit a nerve. Bear's fallen for it and Midwest is softened up by my desperation, but he's still watching for the Black Car of Justice. We're all cold and ready to go.

"Damn, I can't believe this! I called an hour ago! Where are they?"

"Listen, the cops blew it. We worked out a deal. I'm keepin' the paint and he's takin' care of the clean-up. I got it on paper."

Midwest nods in assent grudgingly.

The transaction is completed and I am rolling out.

I am "free," but my fervor and courage have been compromised. I'm shaking and relieved, but in my gut, my self-respect is wounded.

1:30AM. As I skate away, paintless, my work unfinished, a police car cruises up. In the periphery of my vision I see a woman cop discussing the paint job without getting out of the car. The two men speak and gesture to my paint can and graffiti. She gets a radio call and speeds off downtown, passing me up. It's all over. My two angels of the night clump off in the general direction of Castro Street, perhaps to commence a friendship initiated by my wild longing for a reaction on the streets of America.

2:00AM. I'm home, still shook up, minus my paint, but out of danger. Work in the morning in my Johnny Carson monkey suit. I smell like fear; like a man who's deserted his family or friends. But the trauma is wearing off. I plug in the electric guitar and softly play a new song:

*Downtown man ... there's a wall of drugs  
Between your pain and mine  
And it's measured by the times  
We sleep alone...*

The next day I stroll by the parking lot where last night's passion play transpired. Someone from the typewriter company has already painted over the letters with light brown matching paint. On the way home my line keeps looping through my ears: "WHO BUYS REAGAN'S LIES?"

Across Market Street in huge black letters the word "SANDINISTA!" screams out to passers by. No one's erased that one yet. It's been up there two years. It was my last tag.

## STRIP MINING

On this bed in a temporary room we inhabit after the fire,  
my eyes closed, I see the flames...  
and I see her wipe tear from her face.  
Open palms, she presses the inside of her hand  
over her eyes, down her cheeks.

I wipe fatigue from my forehead, eyes,  
rest my head on thick, warm blankets  
covering this bed,  
in a room, in a home not my own,  
feeling displaced, weary.

Fatigue, I lay here,  
in my palm  
I feel her tears  
for the hundreds of years and ties  
about to be broken.

Speaking the ancient tongue,  
she tells of "relocation"  
what it will mean to her,  
her family, their way of life...  
displacement  
to a world not her own.

"WHEN YOU SAY 'ADAPT' DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT REALLY MEANS?"

How easy to change a sweater or shoes,  
an apartment, a phone number.

She takes the smaller rock in her hands,  
she had placed the corn upon the stone.  
She sits, her knees tucked under her,  
on earth covered by thin cloth.  
She presses the grinding rock to the stone...  
corn is readied to be food.  
This stone has been in her family for generations,  
as has this bit of land,  
and this family had been this land's for generations,  
...has been this land's for generations.

"...when your fingernails are frostbitten..."

Oneness with the sheep,  
she endures what they must.  
Wrapped in long worn wool garments,  
woven by her sister's hands,  
she feels the winter cold  
while she stands there beside them.

Waves of flames beneath my skin,  
I awake in an unfamiliar room,  
the softness of down pillows beneath my head...  
fatigue, I drift...

Sleeping in a small one room dwelling, entrance facing east, she and her family greet the new day with pollen, living in a harmony not of this world, in a time, not of this time, timeless.  
The floor of the hogan is hard packed earth, watered down and swept often.  
A stove is located center, a table near it. Crates near one wall house various cans of fruit and vegetables, jars of corn, some seasoning and herbs, dried meat are on shelves built by the doorway of this circular dwelling.  
To one side a raised plank serves as a base for bedding, it is covered by a blanket in red and grey clan design, a gift from kinfolk living a few miles away. Above the bed is a deep-set square window looking out over a corn patch, the sun outside is in the descending phase of its daily journey...heat.  
Inside it is mildly warm.





Two children are away at school, as parents tend to daily chores. Out the window of this dwelling can be seen their father, dark, muscular, his long black hair above his shoulders in a red wrap. He is bending over small stalks of blue corn, just a few inches out of the cracked earth. Over his shoulders, distant, but still recognizable, can be seen fuzzy blotches of white and beige, sheep, and a woman in long skirts, holding a stick, sitting on a large rock. She is staring away over the sheep, towards a vast open chaparral, singing quietly to the sheep and to herself. She thinks of the coolness of coming evening, of the last shearing time, of covering the hogan again with earth, of her children, their father. She thinks of the calmness in the chant she is singing.

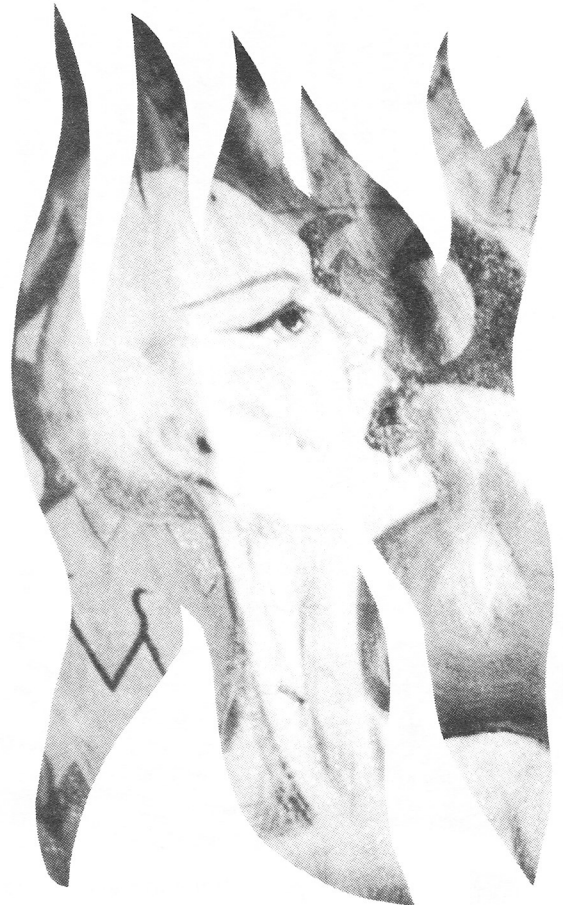
In humbleness,  
they use only what they  
must...  
in this is the maintaining of the  
balance...  
the mutual respect  
between them and their  
environment.

To forcibly remove them  
to gut the earth on which they live  
the home of the heart,  
To take the little they have  
to upset the balance,  
IS TO KILL THEM, IS TO KILL HER!  
STRIP MINING LEAVES NOTHING!  
"Sacrifice Area"...to greed  
not to need.

The donations made to worthy tax-deductible causes  
will not absolve you  
will not absolve you  
of your great emptiness  
the sense of inadequacy  
you try so desperately to bury  
the crimes you commit  
denying the name of it...  
**WILL NOT ABSOLVE YOU.**  
You see,  
the death after all,  
**IS YOUR OWN.**

Two cars in the garage of a three story home in Upper Manchester.  
The VCR casually left on all night, its forty-four inch screen ablaze.  
Fifteen pairs of quality Italian leather shoes, the matching apparel.  
Diamonds in a safety deposit box downtown, continental cuisine, trips to Rio, tickets to the Opera, opening night minks and sequins.  
Skydiving and scuba lessons. Catered cocktail parties, wall to wall mirrors  
and oriental rugs, crystal chandeliers, silver serving ware.  
The insulated safety of especially patrolled exclusive neighborhoods.  
The maid, the gardener, the cook...  
All the cliché accoutrements of success, excess...comfort and convenience...  
**THE ENERGY AND RESOURCES SPENT...**  
the imbalance of pain for pleasure...  
the state of envy you create and exist in...  
**THE IMBALANCE OF PAIN FOR PLEASURE...**  
**STRIP MINING, STRIP MINING, MORE STRIP MINING**  
**STRIP MINING LEAVES NOTHING...**  
nothing.

Staring at the ceiling of this room with softwood floors,  
unfamiliar mahogany furnishings, braided rugs,  
the smoke which expelled us from out two room nest  
still strong in my clothing...  
we are lucky to have a place to rest...  
I feel the fatigue, the disorientation  
and the woman's tear  
in my hand.



*Celeste Conner*

**Kids Art Show FEB. 22 - MAR. 25**  
 A MONTH LONG EXHIBIT OF 100 DRAWINGS AND PAINTINGS BY KIDS  
 LABELED "SEVERELY EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED." THE SHOW WAS  
 ORGANIZED BY RICHARD OLSEN AND THE KIDS MADE MUCH OF THE ART  
 WITH THE SHOW IN MIND. THE WORK OF PREDOMINANTLY BLACK AND  
 POOR 8-10 YEAR OLDS, THE SUBJECT MATTER RANGED FROM THEIR  
 LIFE ON THE STREETS, TO THE THREAT OF WAR, HUMOROUS, OTHER  
 TIMES ANGRY. IT WAS A CAPTIVATING AND INSPIRING SHOW. THAT  
 THESE KIDS WOULD BE DEEMED "CRAZY" BY A SYSTEM THAT IS IBILLY  
 INSANE IS A DEFINITE IRONY. PERHAPS, IN THE SPIRIT OF THE SHOW,  
 WE SHOULD ADAPT THEIR LABEL. ARTISTS WHO ARE SEVERELY AND  
 EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED BY THE PLIGHT OF THE WORLD UNITE!  
 LONG LIVE THE YOUNG REBEL ARTISTS!



## Once Upon a Time There Were Nations

Our perceptions are always being shaped and manipulated by those in power who, behind the mask of their ideas and trends, hold their hidden agendas. Take the idea of nations, for example. I do not believe there exist such things as nations. There are cultures, yes, but not nations. Nations have become (perhaps they always were) artificial containers which serve to pit the human race against itself so that a handful of miserable empty people might feed their insatiable vacuums as they sit back and laugh at us all--we, the toy soldiers who die to defend the principle that the red flowered patch on the bed quilt is superior to the purple polka-dot patch.

There is one nation of human beings, that is all... any other story is just a filthy dirty lie.

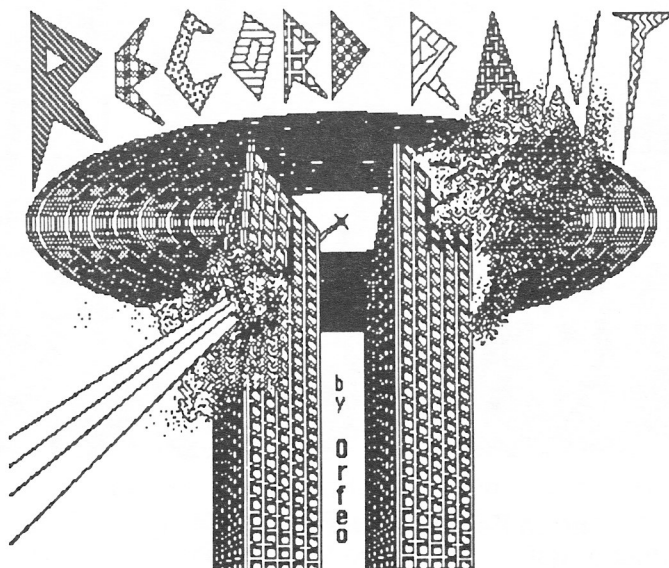
When the issues of religion, nation, and skin color are used to divide us, we are distracted from recognizing our real enemies.

And we all over the world who are fighting against oppression, for truth know this. We are millions and billions of heart beats stronger than the handful of slimy mind-fuckers who can't even feel their own pulse--at least not yet. Just knowing this is reason enough to persevere. We know what it is to be human, what it is to have passion and to love. There are so many of us... For each moment that we realize this, we snatch another moment of victory for the nation of humankind--remember?--the species!

*Margot Pepper*



## ORFEO'S 3-LETTER RECORD RANTS



**Sueno, Eddie Palmieri:** YOW!

**Mind Bomb, The The:** BUY

**Crucial Tracks, Aswad:** ZZZ

**Monteverdi, Vespri Di S. Giovanni Battista, (Gustav Leonhardt):** DIG!

**Burning World, The Swans:** SAD

**Sonic Temple, The Cult:** ZEP

**Suck on This, Primus:** ZEP

**Sea Hags, Sea Hags:** ZEP

**The Real Thing, Faith No More:** ZEP

**The Columbia Years, 1955-1985, Miles Davis (5-CD set):** \$\$\$

**Peace And Love, The Pogues:** A-OK

**Berlioz, Symphonie Fantastique (Roger Norrington/The London Classical Players on period instruments):** WOW!

**Surprise, Syd Straw:** HUH?

**Jeff Beck's Guitar Shop, Jeff Beck:** GOD

**King Swamp, King Swamp:** DOG

**Waltz Darling, Malcolm McLaren:** PUK

**Nine, P.I.L.:** BLA

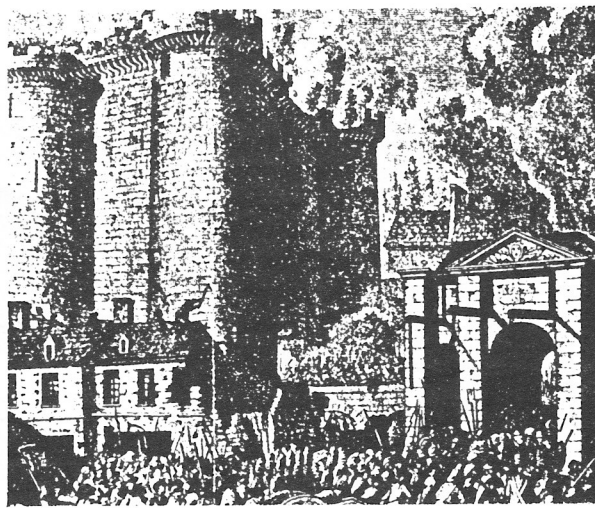
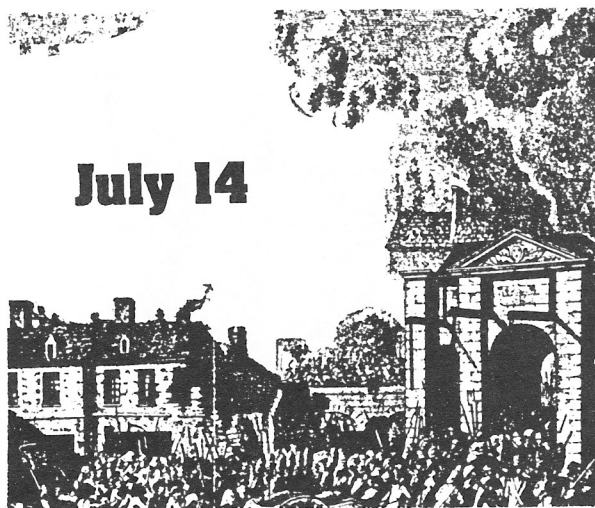
**Keep on Movin', Soul II Soul:** Coo'

**Milton, Milton Nascimento:** ML-O

**Tin Machine, Tin Machine:** ROK!

**Britten, Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings  
(Mackie/Ruckwell/Bedford/Scottish Chamber Orchestra):** YUM

# July 14



"The French Revolution was our model in Russia. Before singing the Internationale, we sang the Marseillaise."

--Alexandre Mnouchnine, film producer, to the New York Times, July 1989.

"Those rights had never been put together and officially proclaimed by a state or government... That's what's so important about the French Revolution."

--William Doyle, University of Bristol, to the Daily Mail, July 15, 1989.

"Mardi 14 (Juillet): Rien"

--Entry in King Louis XVI's journal of 1789.

The grandiose festival which honored the bicentennial of Bastille Day was sullied by the tacky "diplomacy by insult" of France's (and everyone's) favorite, Margaret Thatcher. On French television, she said, "(Human rights) date back much farther than (the French Revolution.) We have our own Great Charter of 1215 and the notion...goes back to the Greeks and even before...(The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen started) the language of communism." Her reward was a seat in the upper reaches of the grandstand for the big parade, alongside Mobutu, another favorite.

For months, a battle had raged in France about this celebration. Jacques Chirac, Reaganite mayor of Paris, was outraged by Mitterand's elaborate plans for the celebration of an "embarrassing moment in French history." Jean Le Pen, fearless leader of the National Front, who perennially gets about 2% of the vote and about 40% of the ink, especially from the racist tabloids which plague the Paris streets, threatened to send in his skinhead boys when he heard that African leaders would be in attendance as special guests of the government.

To appease the right, Mitterand called in the troops. "Paris en état de siège," Le Figaro, one of the leading Paris dailies read. 30,000 cops, military, Boy Scouts, whatever, were to gather in a small area of central Paris for the spectacle, and accompanying

summit conference, replete with helicopters, blimps, water posses, anti-aircraft weapons (probably the legendary Exocet missiles), "not to mention," the U.S.- French language paper France-Amerique reported, "an ultra-secret anti-terrorist dispatch," all for the protection of 1% of the land area of Paris where the summit would be meeting and staying.

The possibility of open dissent was then virtually erased, and Le Pen would not send in the skinheads to protect the city from the inevitable invasion of Palestinian terrorists that Chirac had envisioned, or Algerians in drunken states of passion charging from the rai clubs to terrorize the polite columns of gallic celebrants.

The Revolution's impact on human history is profound and the controversy about its effect continues, as heated as ever, just as the division between the worker and the elite continues to seethe.

The sides were drawn during the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI, when oppressive taxes, a foreign policy which divided the country and an economic repression had instilled in the workers and peasants the need to riot throughout France.

After a long night of her notorious debauchery, upon hearing reports of widespread revolt in Paris, Queen Marie Antoinette responded, "Let them eat pâté." I suppose that's better than "nothing," as the King noted in his journal.

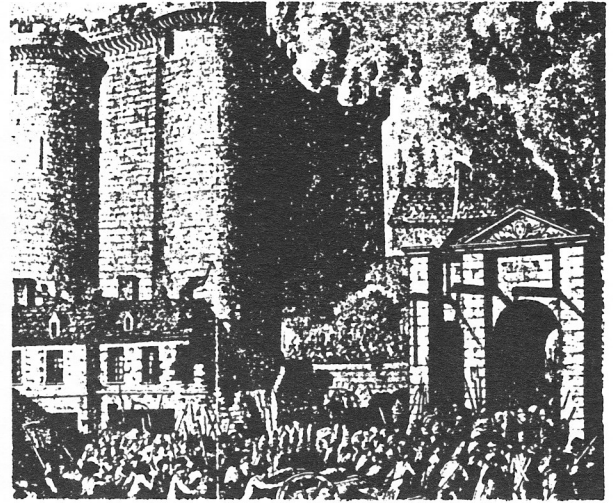
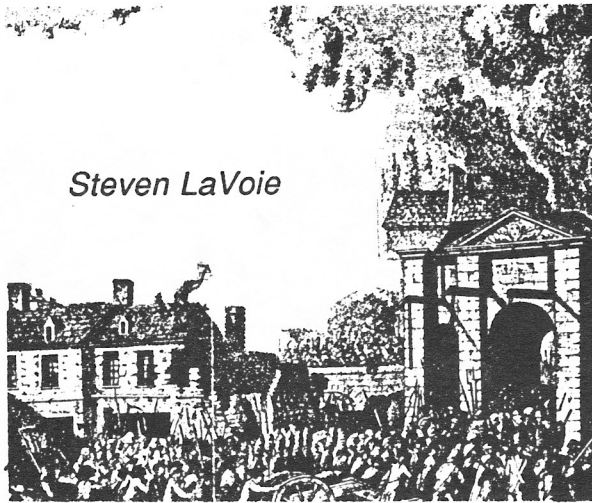
France, intact for 1000 years, the absolute seat of Western civilization at the time, had collapsed to the will of *sans-culottes*, those too poor to wear the fashionable pedal-pushers of the times.

At the basis of the revolt which swept France was a set of principles which have changed world politics forever. The intellectual bourgeoisie, who had forced the King to open the assembly to them, failed to act quickly enough, but responded with a document which rivals all others in human history for its contrite and accurate description of government.

"The Declaration of The Rights of Man and of the Citizen" was produced after months of deliberation, among the likes of Lafayette, Danton, Robespierre, Richelieu and others. What had to be different from the models they saw, the writings of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison in the United



Steven LaVoie



States, was the admission of the working-class to the power structure, along with women, who had each been crucial to the success of the rebellion. They also instituted the abolition of slavery into the declaration, due partially to the remarkable exploits of Toussaint Louverture in Haiti, who had captured the imagination of the intellectual revolutionary elite who were attached to the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau saw a natural world, inherent in which were the pleasures denied by the Church and the rights denied by the State.

Certain things were not going to be compromised, which had been in all other previous attempts at democracy. Freedom had to be made the crux and all people (at least French people, which included the colonies) had to be included.

Thus, the preamble came to read: "ignorance, disregard or contempt of the rights of humankind (*l'homme*) are the sole causes of public misfortunes and governmental corruption." And later, "social distinctions may be based only on common utility." And what is most significant, and most lacking in the Constitutions of other democracies is this statement: "The aim of all political association is to preserve the natural and imprescriptible rights of man," which included "resistance to oppression."

So the French state would be, ideally, only to serve to uphold human liberties.

As the street action continued in Paris, however, the authors of "Declaration" quickly became squeamish. Heads of murdered aristocrats were paraded down the streets of the Left Bank, many of them heads of allies to the intelligentsia. The Revolution was no longer being discussed in cafés of Rive Gauche where the free-thinking and literate had been since the reign of Charles the Great, it was right in front of your face.

In the "Declaration of the Rights of the Man and the Citizen," is the word "*l'homme*," which means "man," but can also mean "mankind." The original use of the singular "*l'homme*," was intentional. The plural, "*les hommes*," as in English, would have given gender to the word. However, the lawyers managed to determine a sexual distinction, thus denying equal rights to women. Soon the women and the slaves were forgotten. And the male workers, the *sans-culottes* who had taken and later dismantled the Bastille, would become pawns

to the bourgeois, learned elite to whom they had given power. They were conscripted to become cops of the Terror.

Fear of the people who had ignited the rebellion led to the tragic demise of freedom in France. And judging from Maggie Thatcher's comments, and from Chirac's demand for troops, there remains a distinct fear of liberty and of the people.

The French Revolution was obviously far ahead of its time.

After Thatcher delivered her cute retort about the significance of Bastille Day to eager viewers of French TV, French Premier Michel Rocard condemned her for the U.K.'s "current trend toward social cruelty." The British took offense, and Rocard's aide, Denise Mairey quickly responded: "Rocard was speaking French and used the phrase "*cruauté sociale*," which is not so blunt as the English translation of "social cruelty." He really meant "social inequality."

Later, in response, Maggie sent a first edition copy, in English of course, of Charles Dickens' *The Tale of Two Cities*, obviously to fill his head with more British misconceptions of world history.

Meanwhile, "*cruauté sociale*" means, as it always has, "heartlessness," and "*l'homme*" continues to mean "mankind," not "men."

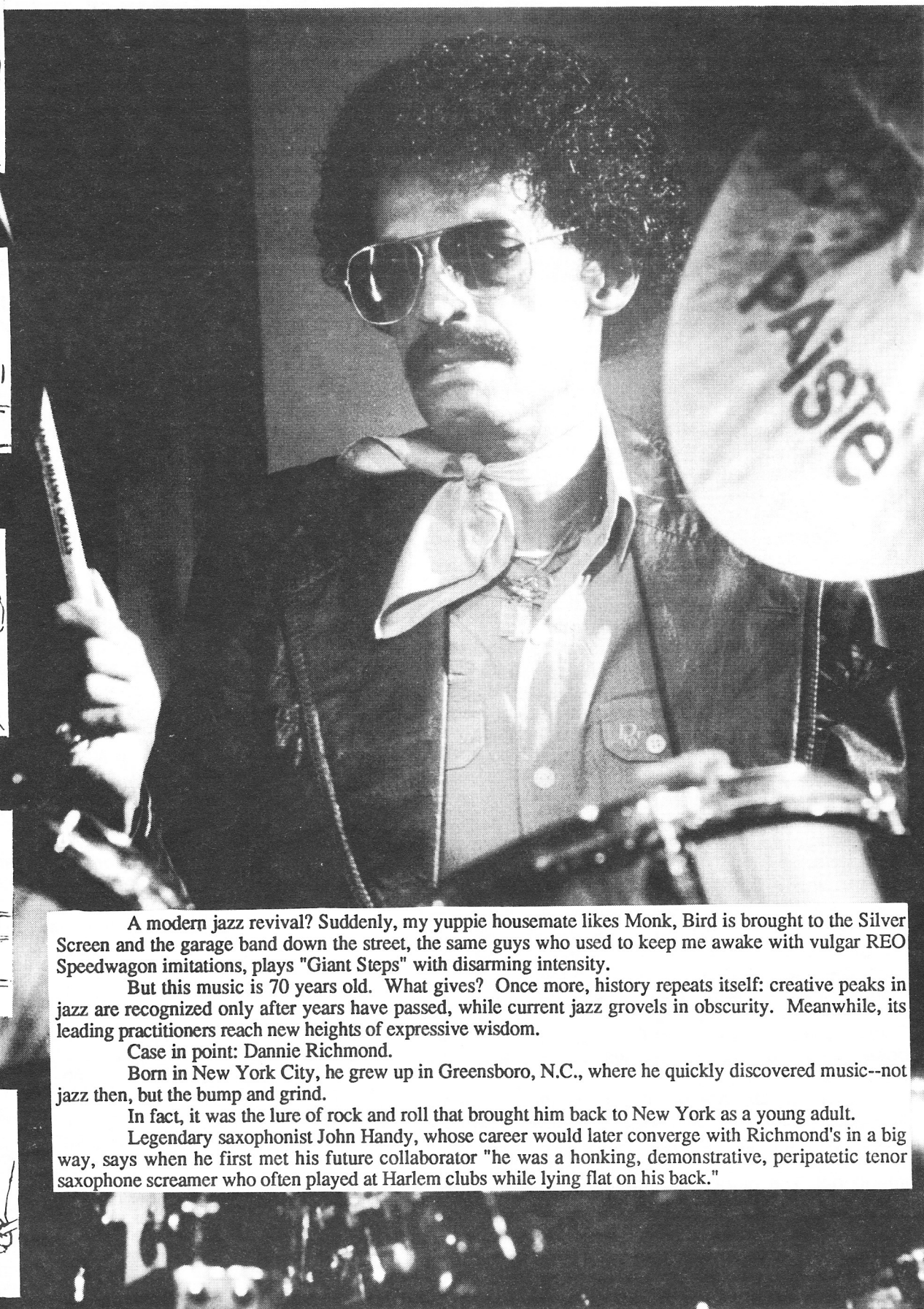
While the British were trashing the French, the United States was trying to pay back its debt, again, to the French by sending the Florida A&M marching band to represent "us" to the throngs gathered. They took the opportunity to stage a spectacular and overt tribute to James Brown before the 150 leaders gathered in the bleachers. Bush sat next to Mitterand, not realizing any controversy, while Thatcher was craning her neck from the back row. None of the leaders noticed, nor did the media, but subtly, "Free James Brown" was being communicated to the bicentennial crowd--by the Florida A&M marching band, of all things!

"Free communication of thought and opinion is one of the most precious of the rights of man." And a bunch of beach crabs from the number one party school in America exercised it on Bastille Day, 200 years later. Only no one seemed to notice.



# DANNIE RICHMOND

Guy Ashley



A modern jazz revival? Suddenly, my yuppie housemate likes Monk, Bird is brought to the Silver Screen and the garage band down the street, the same guys who used to keep me awake with vulgar REO Speedwagon imitations, plays "Giant Steps" with disarming intensity.

But this music is 70 years old. What gives? Once more, history repeats itself: creative peaks in jazz are recognized only after years have passed, while current jazz grovels in obscurity. Meanwhile, its leading practitioners reach new heights of expressive wisdom.

Case in point: Dannie Richmond.

Born in New York City, he grew up in Greensboro, N.C., where he quickly discovered music--not jazz then, but the bump and grind.

In fact, it was the lure of rock and roll that brought him back to New York as a young adult.

Legendary saxophonist John Handy, whose career would later converge with Richmond's in a big way, says when he first met his future collaborator "he was a honking, demonstrative, peripatetic tenor saxophone screamer who often played at Harlem clubs while lying flat on his back."

At age 25, Richmond began to teach himself the drums. About six months later, he went to a club called the Pad to see his friend from Greensboro, Lou Donaldson, play with a group led by the tempestuous Charles Mingus.

When the leader launched into a tirade that was somewhat typical of his career--ordering off the stand a drummer who kept lackadaisical time--Richmond was summoned from the audience to sit in. It was the beginning of an association with Mingus' Jazz Workshop that would span over 20 years. (Only one other musician, trombonist Jimmy Knepper, even came close to lasting as long with Mingus. Their association ended abruptly one night, however, when Mingus interrupted a Knepper solo and gave him a roundhouse left to the gut.)

In a career plagued by uncertainties--caused by mental difficulties, poor business decisions and an ever changing lineup of sidemen--Mingus found in Richmond the stability he needed to create: Richmond was accommodating, attentive, quick-witted: a foundation. Richmond said it was Mingus who really taught him to play the drums; as a result, his reflexes were so attuned to the leader's quixotic temperament and multi-colored compositional style that Mingus could devote his energies to the winds.

Handy, who played with the Workshop during 1958-59, said Richmond virtually lived Mingus' music. He sometimes knew the tunes better than the composer: "I remember on several occasions when Mingus would forget a certain passage and Dannie would have to hum it back for him."

Despite his unusual combination of quick wits and wrists, Richmond even now rarely gains attention outside his association with Mingus--and almost never is he listed alongside Max Roach, Art Blakey, Elvin Jones and other leading rhythmic innovators of his era. Nevertheless, Mingus' complex Charlie Parker-influenced tunes demanded of Richmond an uncommon facility, one that earned him the lasting respect of his peers.

Richmond always understood what Mingus was trying to do--and together they navigated the shoals of a difficult period in the music's development.

Their collaboration resulted in a volatile, sometimes apocalyptic, body of work that was both successfully derivative and foresightful. They could blend with offhand brilliance seemingly inapposite styles of the past with dissonant, almost atonal passages that anticipated the "Free Jazz" movement of the sixties.

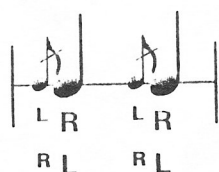
A calming of sixties revolutionary fervor, as well as of the demons which wracked Mingus' soul, helped to facilitate a mid-seventies comeback for the Workshop.

By 1974, the telepathic duo formed an alliance with two younger musicians schooled amid the musical clamor of the sixties--Don Pullen and George Adams. The two new members infused an element of anarchy into Mingus' music which he ingeniously utilized in some of his best ever compositions: "Sue's Changes," "Free Cell Block F, 'Tis Nazi USA," and "Remember Rockefeller at Attica."

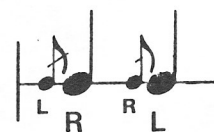
Again, it seemed, Mingus' role was to reassert organization after the "avant garde" of the sixties had blown jazz truths out of the water. But, despite the high points, the leader's will to impose the strictures of composition often clashed with the freewheeling inclinations of his sidemen. By 1977, the band which promised to resume jazz from the compromises of jazz/rock "fusion" was all but defunct.

Richmond went on to join Handy, Adams, Pullen and several other Workshop alumni to form an ensemble that played only Mingus compositions as a tribute after his death in 1979. The music had its exhilarating moments, but lacked the dramatic tension ordered by the former leader's brooding presence.

It was from these jaded attempts, however, that Richmond found his perfect musical setting. Like the Workshop, the Pullen/Adams group used the jazz tradition to express the black musical experience in America--its hybridization, its outrage, its alternating quest for freedom and form.

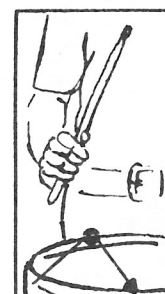
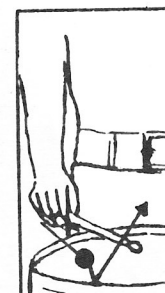
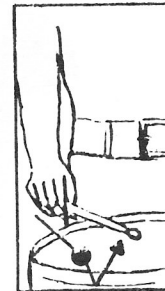


*Richmond always  
understood what Mingus  
was trying to do*



Pullen and Adams each gleaned the best from the sixties tumult: Pullen used dissonant, percussive chords to break the bonds of Bud Powell bebop or earthy funk; Adams, like Coltrane, was implacable in his pursuit of the superior riff, and his throaty squawks and banshee cries suggest a merging of horn and humanity. But it was through Richmond, the acknowledged leader of the group, that the music found just proportion. He focused, distilled and directed, imposing a tradition that deepened the cacophonous edge. By synthesizing the most primitive elements with the most expressionistic, the music exposes jazz--be it free, bop, or rag--as the voice of a people yearning for freedom.

Richmond died of a heart attack just four days after I saw him in his final Bay Area stint at Koncepts in Oakland. His accomplishments were largely underestimated at the time of his death, but the music will speak for itself. Needless to say, that he deserves the recognition that eluded him during his life hardly matters. What matters is that during a thirty-year career he helped define the vehicle of jazz, epitomizing the greatness of the genre which continues to be the loudest and most articulate voice for the liberation of his culture and of the human soul itself.

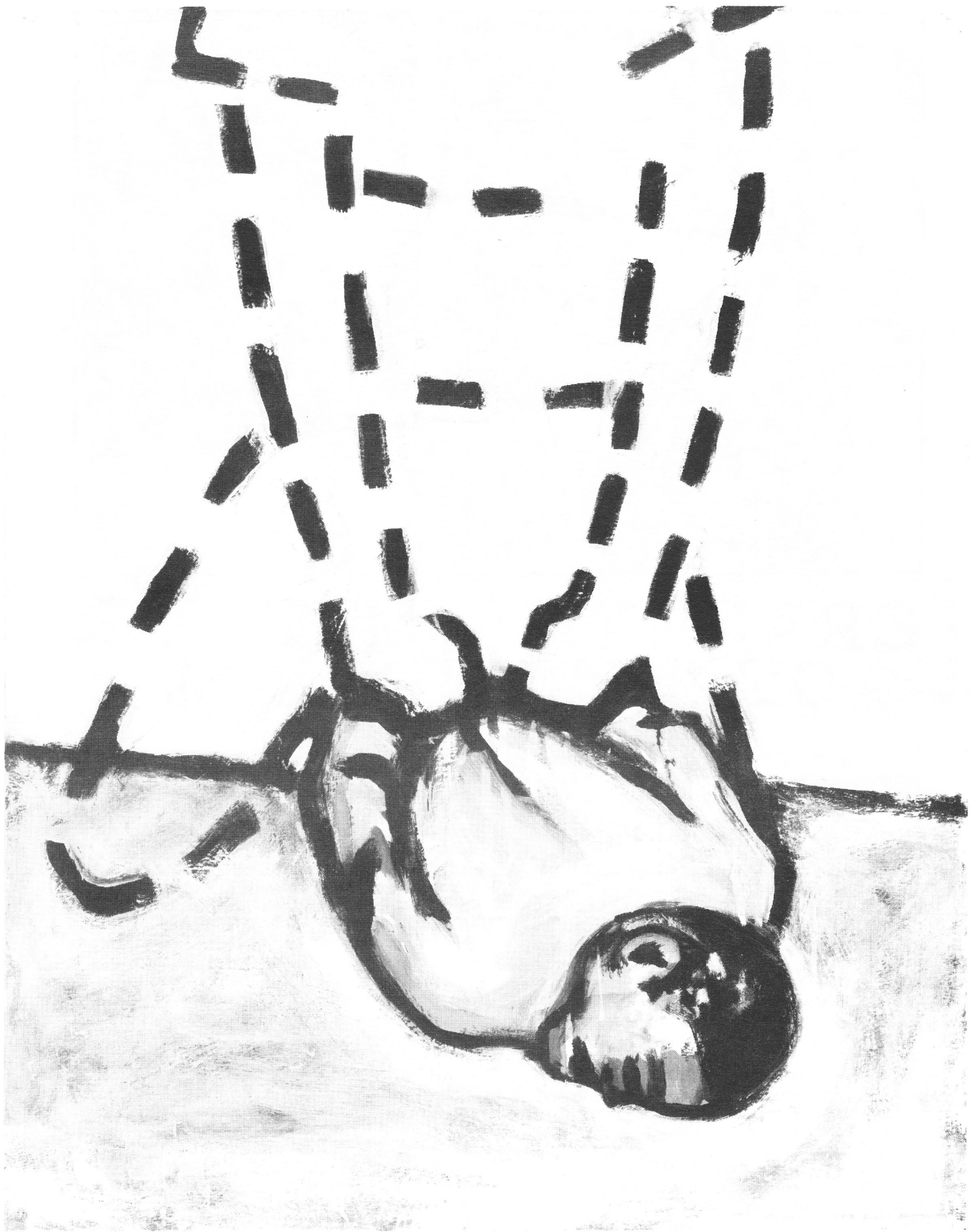






External Control/ Internal Control by Richard Olsen







# CRACKED MIRROR OF PREJUDICE

*Annika Kahn*

To have "control" over something or someone is a less tangible concept than many of us would like to think. When most of us think of power, we think of the actual legal power of governments to regulate our lives. We have also experienced somewhere within our own individual stratospheres the very personal power of authority figures within families, relationships, or even ourselves. Pure and total control, however, does not exist. Even if you threaten me with a gun, I still have the ultimate power to choose not to obey you. If one believes strongly enough in the "idea" of authority or ultimate power, then the very idea itself becomes the weapon, the system of control. Ideas and images can thus be even more powerful than the blatant use of force. This is especially apparent in photography. When an image is capable of influencing public and personal opinion it acquires a position of incredible strength. There *is* something to the cliché, "A picture says a thousand words"—indeed, a picture has the ability to say with great clarity more than at least a few hundred words! It also has the ability to take "control" of its subject in many more ways than most of us are aware of. I will focus on documentary photography to exemplify this point.

When we read an article in a newspaper with an accompanying image, how often is it that we critique the image over the words? Seldom, I think. Most often we accept the printed image as 'truth' of some sort and quickly move on to the text. In the same vein, many of us turn to words for historic or day to day information, yet how often do we rely on a photograph to do the same? It is dangerous, in my opinion, to pass over the complexities and intentional messages of documentary photography: it is the photograph as a powerful communicator which provides most of our emotional responses to a particular situation. It is the photograph that we see and interpret--no matter how unconsciously--first. Understanding where these responses come from is crucial.

The information which we receive from documentary photography is never neutral. This holds true for two reasons. One is the intention of the photographers and the editors who choose what we will see. Communication through photography is intended to alter behavior, even if only the behavior of believing. As Beumont Newhall, an accomplished historian of photography as well as the author of the *History of Photography* and head curator of the Museum of Modern Art in New York

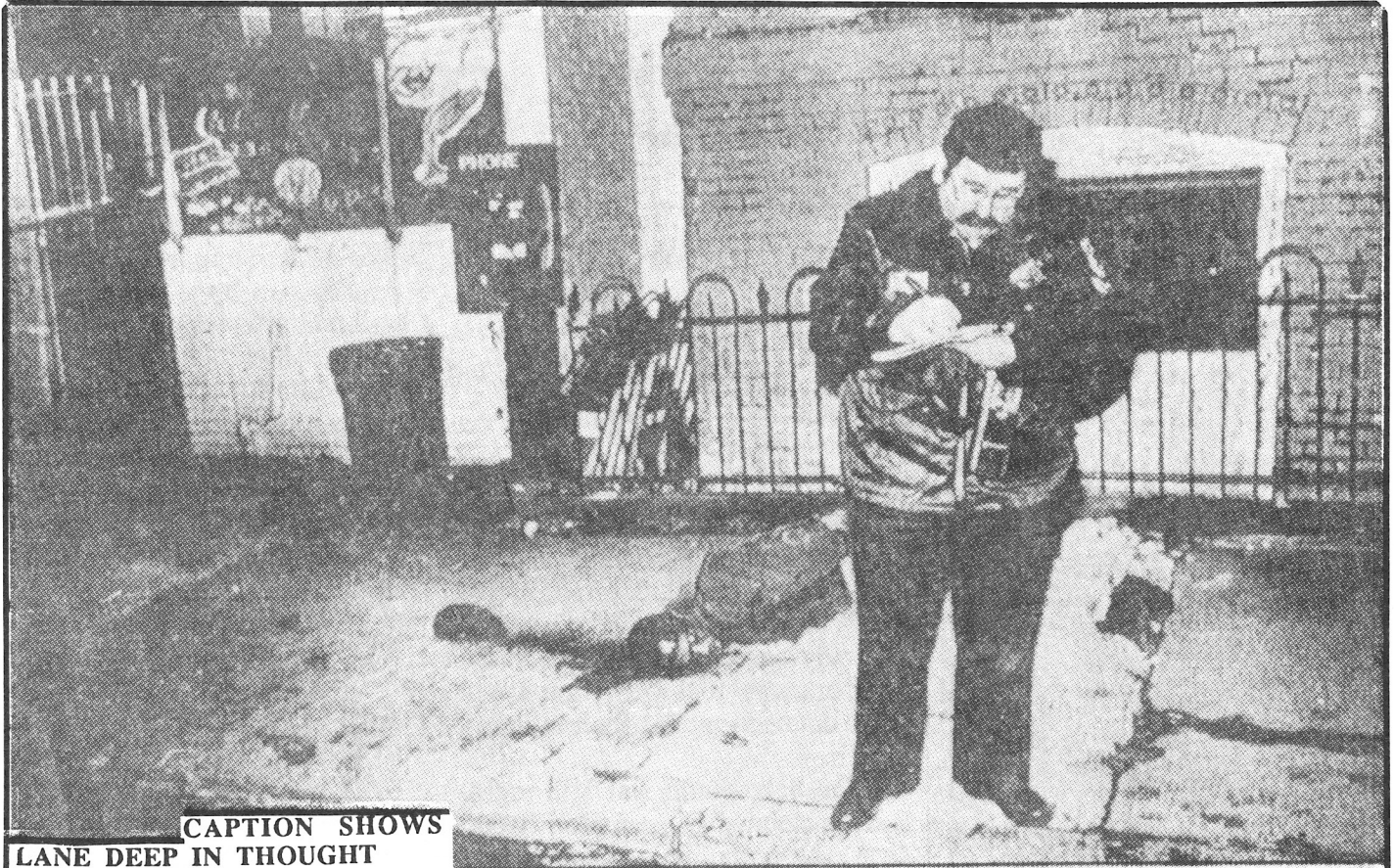


has observed of a photographer engaged in documentary work: ... (he) "seeks to do more than convey information... His aim is to persuade and convince." Newhall goes on to state that, "it is not information that documentary photography supplies, but an inescapably biased form of communication." I agree with Newhall. Perhaps it is only the illusion of information that we receive.

The second reason information is never neutral is that information is always received and interpreted by individuals according to their idiosyncratic beliefs. Einstein observed that "theory precedes seeing." Theory is often not altered by "seeing" if the seeing is skewed by strongly held

opinions tied to some emotional response. In this case it is the pre-formulated opinion due to one's socio-cultural background that brings meaning to the image.

What follows is a group of selected photographs from two major newspapers--the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *New York Times*. Each one is accompanied by a personal interpretation of its meaning. It is my intention to explore the ways in which these photographs are a-neutral. Mainly, I wish to show how quick we are to believe what we see. I hope to exemplify the importance in learning how to read photographs with judgement and criticism as well as for information.



**CAPTION SHOWS  
LANE DEEP IN THOUGHT**

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**A District of Columbia** police officer takes notes at the scene of a slaying in a known drug area of the city.

The following excerpts, "Who are the Real Victims" and "Ain't Things Dandy; North Admits he Lied," accompany respective photographs which have been interpreted from an emotional and opinionated standpoint rather than a technical one. Both exemplify the notion that "theory precedes seeing."

#### **WHO ARE THE REAL VICTIMS?**

It's a tragic moment for police officer Frank Lane. He's seen more crime than most officers in his district.

He's also seen more therapists. It's another "Dark and Stormy Night" and Lane has just been called to yet another scene of crime. Johnny Talker, the victim, lies not five feet from Lane, and a Pacific Bell phone stands not five feet from Johnny. Both appear dead.

"Being the only officer at the scene of the crime is tough" remarks Lane.

Lane told the press later, "It's very unsettling. I always feel pulled off center. It's important for me to practice what I've been taught by my therapist, especially during these horrid moments." Officer Lane continued,

[news analysis] obviously very moved: "First, I close my eyes and meditate that there is white light all around. Then I take out my journal and write about my feelings."

When asked whether he does all this before checking to make sure if the victim is indeed dead, Lane replied, "Oh, yes. I have to. It's part of my self-growth."

#### **AIN'T THINGS DANDY; NORTH ADMITS HE LIED**

The "seven mile umbrella run-away race" stars North and briefcase on one



team and the Law on the other. This is the three mile stretch. While the others look tired North appears lively and full of energy. He's got his winning smile on. "I've got more energy than the entire administration put together," pants North as he passes by.

Apparently, according to secret but reliable sources, North saved his strength by not telling the truth. As he approaches the four mile mark he says, "There is actually a chemical reality about lying and conserving energy. Really! My doctor told me so."

[news analysis] A wonderful image and probably the only one of North that doesn't show him gloomy-face-held-high sitting in a court room. There is no "help me, oh poor me" message reeking from this photograph. In fact, in accordance with the original text, North's confident, joy-giving smile fits appropriately. "Oliver North admitted yesterday that he lied to House members in 1986 about... ." The above image is the first I've seen that actually does justice to this deceitful man. It shows him out of reach of any type of punishment, it shows him on his way to being a free man. Did the photographer plan this? I doubt it.

The two photographs that follow, entitled "Marketing Attack" and "Crack Down," are used as examples of the technical intentions and complications on the part of the photographers and editors involved. The images have acquired ability to manipulate our opinions and emotions from the technical sides alone. The person behind the camera had a story he or she wanted to convey, or was paid to convey, or both.

### CRACK DOWN

What we see here is a photograph that has been printed with a 'muddy' background, illuminating only the 'victim' of government assault and the right shoulder of what looks to be the 'officer in charge.' It is a photograph which accurately shows the drama of the situation in China. The shadows in the background only add to the feelings of fear--what will happen to this person?

To the left we see only a silhouette of a soldier--the only one visible who holds a rifle, face high. Again, a palpable sense of threat looms in the intentional darkness. The clear and well-lit image of the prisoner



accentuates the government's feeling towards the protestor; he is isolated as he should be for doing something wrong. The image exudes a sense of death. And there appears something very final in the victim's severe expression. His expression alone--the only one visible due to the lighting--tells of his immediate future before it is even written.

The level of detachment captured by the different shadows of light between the background soldiers, the prisoner, and officers in front, evokes, again, a

sense of finality, procedure, government "rules"--doubly stressed by the citizen's exhausted expression. And, thus, we are *shown* what will happen to a 'bad element' in the system if he or she speaks out for basic human rights. It is the technical complications of the image that bring an uncanny and dramatic truth to the recent events in China. As an audience, we too might feel depleted, as appears the prisoner, from the image, never mind the text!

## MARKETING ATTACK

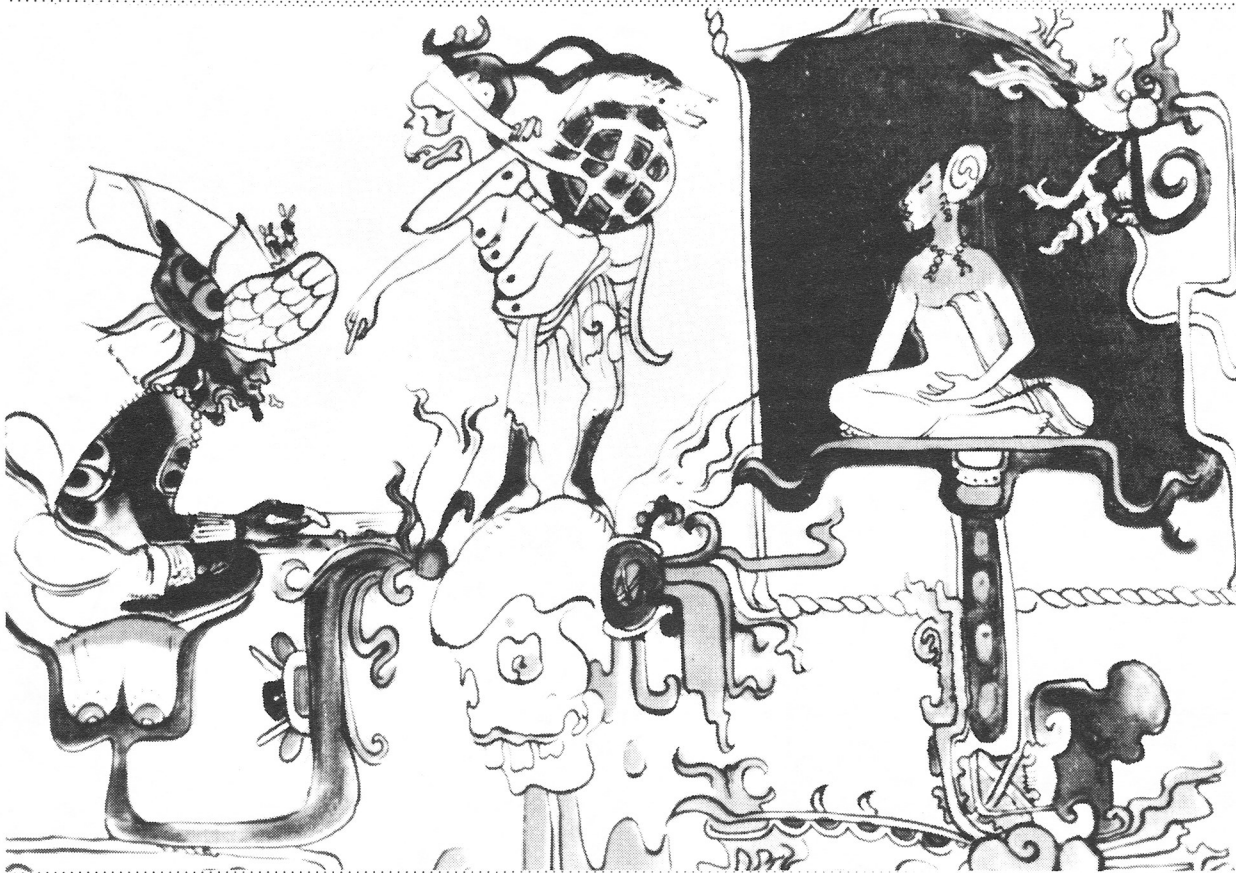
The photographer of the above image has wisely set his subject up in a such a way that conveys the subject's self-confidence. The setting chosen by the photographer also gives us, the audience, a sense of authority, of the power of high achievement. It is specifically the over-lit desk top and the shiny background which brings to life a sense of heightened power. The subject appears as God might, with face and hands slightly emerging from illuminating force--or merely from a carefully planned back-lit set. The 'Holy

Hill' (otherwise known as Coit Tower), also back-lit, brings full circle the spiritual and religious sentiment about this man, this image. It is the careful lighting, and nothing more, standing against intentionally shaded sides that brings an uncanny force to the notion (or illusion) of making it in this world. The photographer uses his technical abilities well. He successfully conveys the marketplace, the position of executive businessmen (unavailable to most) and the strength behind the purchasing power of money.

"My life has never been the same," exclaims business consultant John P. Dalton, cover man for the Executive Journals. "I feel happier, more in control." Dalton himself has only made two business deals in his entire life, yet for him, that was enough to encounter the spirit behind capitalism.

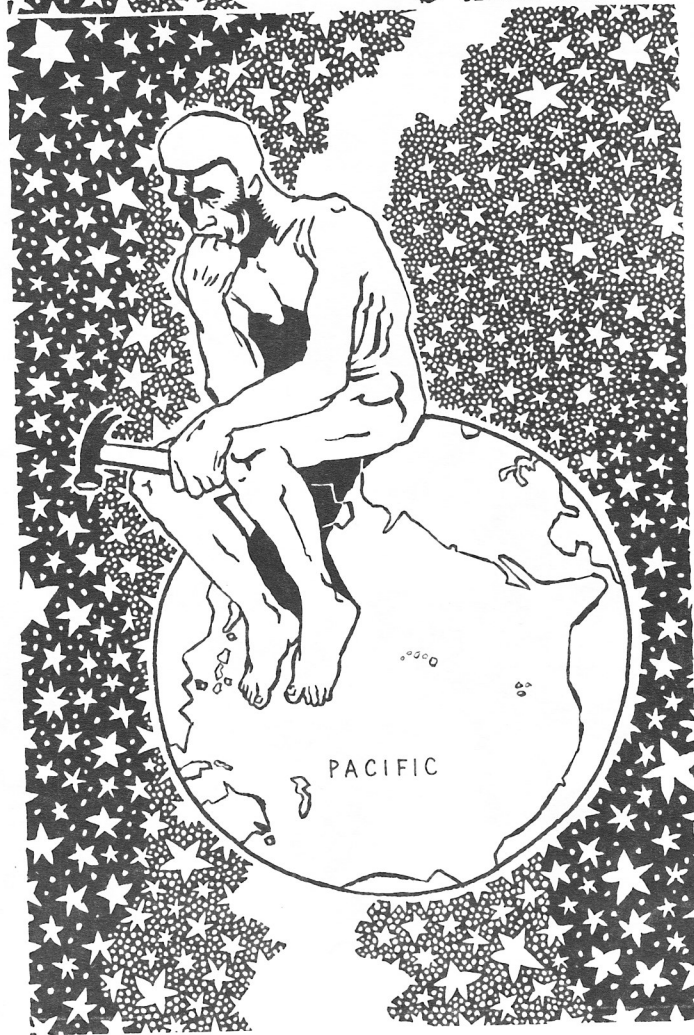
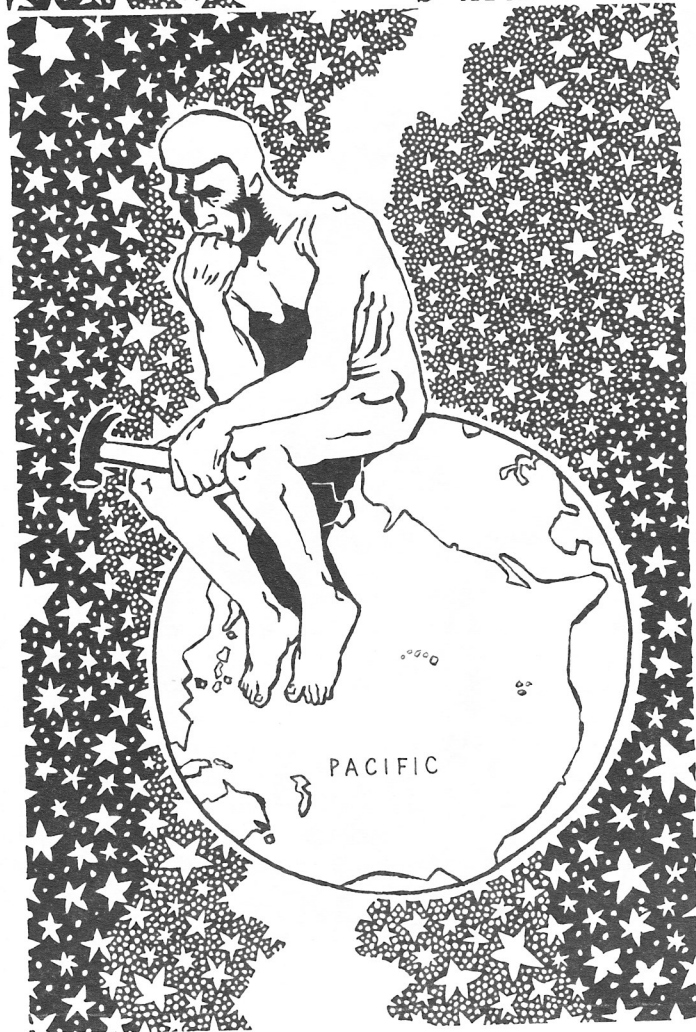
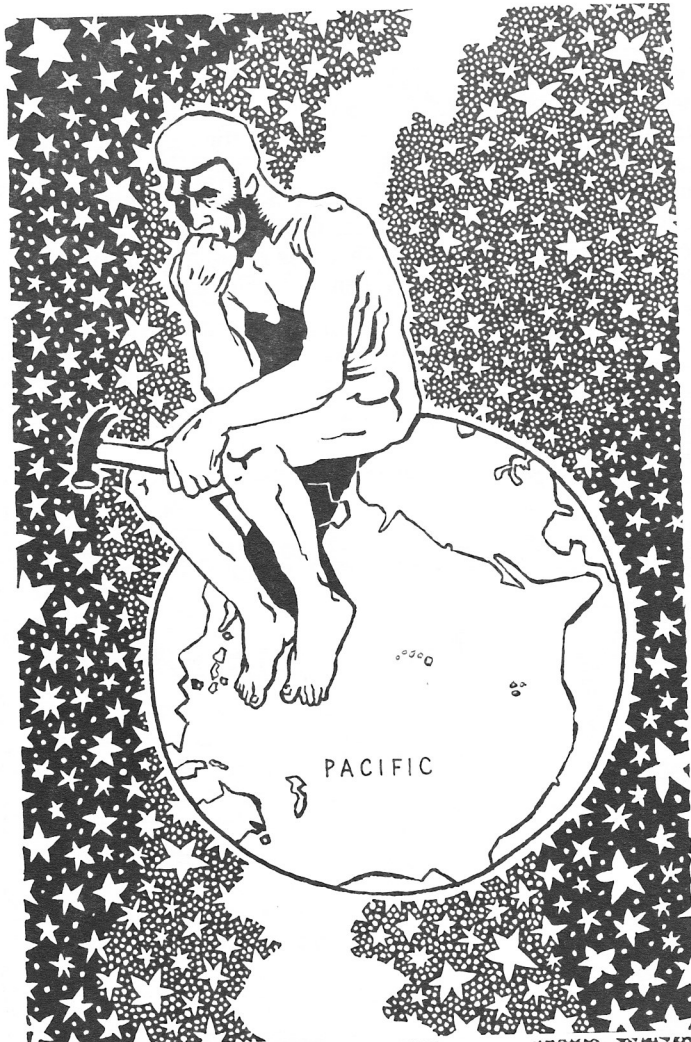


## Rosenberg Leads BoFA Marketing Attack



Patricia Amelin's Popul Yuh Animation Original Art Show  
MAR 29 - APRIL 23  
IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SHOWING OF THE FILM: A SERIOUS SHOW  
OF HIGH QUALITY ART FOR ANIMATED FILM. INK ON LAYERED SHEETS  
OF ACETATE DEPICTING THE MAYAN MYTH.





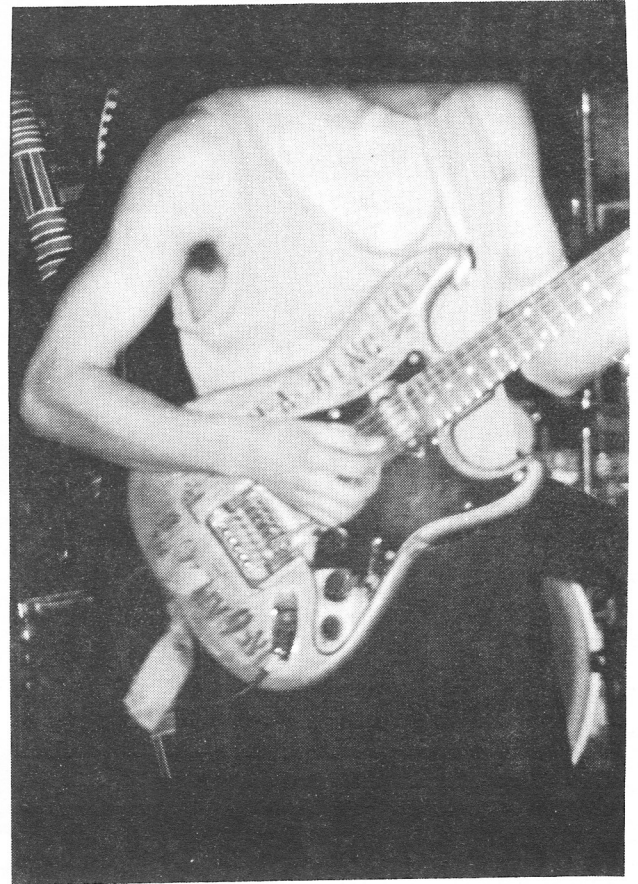


# THE FIGHT FOR LIBERATION IS INTERNATIONAL !



## AUTONOMI ★ NEWSLETTER NR. 3:

AN ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL/ECONOMIC  
SITUATION IN DENMARK AND THE DANISH  
LEFTWING - PUT IN AN INTERNATIONAL  
CONTEXT.

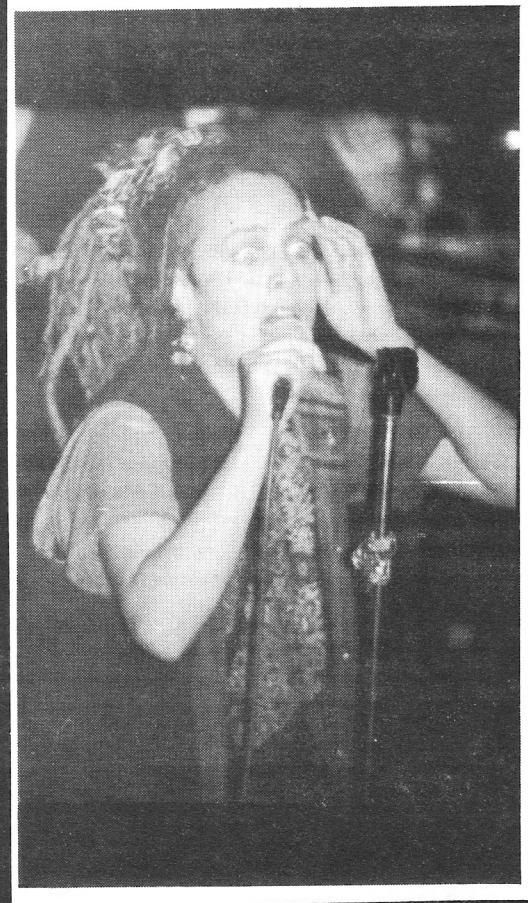


sets combined acoustic & electric instruments and drew good responses in spite of the driving Wednesday rain.

In early '88 several of our comrades trekked to West Berlin just in time for the world IMF conference, which sparked a week of political actions guaranteed to strike fear and loathing into the warm hearts of the industrialists, bankers and specially imported Berlin & West German policemen. A good account of this week can be found in Komotion #2 (The "Our Culture Not Theirs" issue.) On Feb. 18 we saw footage from these demonstrations from a work in progress, which included scenes from Reagan's visit to Berlin in '87 and Protests in Wakersdorf aimed at exposing the lies about Chernobyl. "We have stopped the radiation at the border!" For the musical section of the

evening, **Polymorphia** debuted their industrial post-rock party sit-down stand-up dancedub compositions, fronted by their dreadlocked singer who once graced every BART station-Diana Trimble. Totally awesome!

**World Entertainment War** closed the night. Did they burn money? Did they make an omelet? Did they burn anarchist flags? That "lead singer" ROB took a bunch of his clothes off, and...suddenly it was TOPLESS night at KOMOTION! Lots of people took their shirts off! Breasts were everywhere! Again! "Give me what i want everything i want exactly what i want forever now once upon a time..." This band defines what a million other bands only dream of... It rocks it funks it SAYS TRUTH in a billion FUCKING points of healing light. Investigate them whenever possible. Dance to their billion points of... ok, ok.





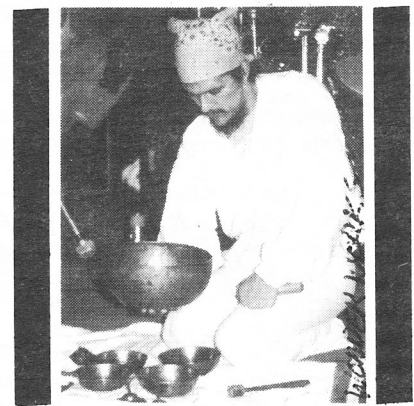
On March 1, a standing-room-only crowd came to a premiere by local filmmaker **Phillip Guilbeau**, whose films make "Pink Flamingos" look like "Leave it to Beaver." His disturbing trilogy of films examine the Lambert family; "their psychosis stemmed from our own American societal diseases- -racism, sexism, and religious fanaticism." Highlights include an unforgettable X-rated sequence by G-- and H--, convincing me that H-- missed the casting for "The Devil in Miss Jones"; superb schizophrenic acting by Phillip as the Dr. and patient (with some fine soft-shoe by Lindy Lambert); and Debbie Gordon's *mean* costume and make-up! Hopefully, the uninitiated will get to see Phillip's films somewhere soon. But if not, we hope to do another showing by the end of the year, including a new film he's working on now--I can't wait!

Adding to the night's festivities were French composer **Jean Luc Mas**, who did a solo electric bass performance, and spoken word performer **Peter Plate**, who read some of the more seamy segments from his book, *Black Wheel of Anger*. Plate read with such intensity and drama that his monologue occasionally lapsed into being humorous. Whether intentional or not he is able to go with these moments, adding a wonderfully off-balance and surreal element to his deadly serious themes.

A little late for Mardi Gras but early for the Ides of March, the **Les Blank** film, "**Always for Pleasure**," almost DIDN'T get shown on March 4. First, there was a power blackout. Some obeh dude burned candles on our neighborhood and P.G. & E. couldn't do a thing until 9:30 when the spell wore off. It finally worked (the projector) and we showed a pungent film, all about Louisiana & the Mardi Gras & the Bon Ton Roulet they have down there. **Lourdes Unanua** danced a short hot samba in a shimmering Carnaval outfit. We located **Jungular Blues** just in time, and **REGGIE and Co.** punched out second-line rhythms and funky tunes 'til people started taking their shirts off again. Jungular Blues contains members of Terra Incognita, soon to be mentioned...

Forget "Friday the 13th VIII" and "Halloween III," it's ... **OUT NIGHT OUT II!** This ear bending musical and theatrical mini-fest featured **President's Breakfast**, with **Click Dark**; an adventurous ensemble that roved from dub-funk, ala' Adrian Sherwood, to unusual arrangements of Ornette Coleman songs. Click has recently released the PB album as well--check it out! Also on the bill were the **Philosophers**, with their post-post-modern-urban-folk-music-theater, and a fare-well performance by **Comic Book Opera** (we miss you guys!), who

also have an excellent record out of their free-wheeling, jazzy saxophones, bass and drums.



Like wow, man, I found myself at this place called **Placebo House**, and there were, like, rainbow colored lights dancing on walls that were moving and the only money I saw looked like artwork, each bill individually drawn, and I remember this huge bowl of mushrooms and "plaubo" tabs, and there was music by this band, **Wonderworks**, that was so dreamy notes cascaded onto the dance floor, and the lead-singer-shaman danced around playing trombone and making spirits rise and then they became a movie of changing lines and shapes and man, like I can't remember when it was, but it was!



**Terra Incognita** has been getting in shape for quite some time, and now are in their prime. A juju/high lonesome/funk trouble handfull! They played on April 1, with the **Wrestling Worms**, another everchanging band from Santa Cruz, always at the forefront of the post-Ellington jazz universe (echoes of Mingus, Carla Bley & Beefheart!) We screened the film "**Popul Vuh**", an animated version of the Mayan creation myth. A collaboration between **Patricia Amlin & Joanne Corso**, it's much more than a cartoon, with ornate batik-like figures and subliminal electric music. The voices of the Gods & the Twins (the heroes) reminded me of ancient fairy tales and shadow plays. A preview of the animation cells of **POPUL VUH** was given at our March 29 Art Opening. Here were individual frames of key scenes, works of art in themselves, from the thousands of drawings that must have gone into the animation. March 29 was also a benefit for the Anarchist Conference. Lovingly curated by **Jess Grant** (I.W.W. & BOMBS NOT FOOD) this event showcased the acoustic talents of **Stephen Riave**, **Anne Hill**, and **Mr. Science**, who taught us about primary colors, hybrids and oxymorons. More about the Anarchist Conference later...



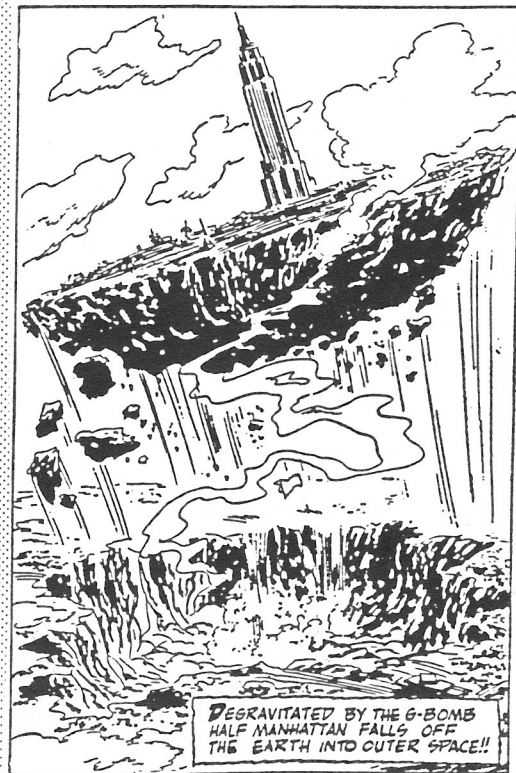
Also screened on this evening was a short film, "**Cumana Devil**," centering on a man in Cumana, Venezuela named Luis Hurtado. To the great delight of children and adults alike, Luis undergoes a transformation several times a year into a one-man el diablo. Complete with wings and tail, his costume, mask and make-up are made the more effective by his psychological preparation. Working first in his home with a mirror and a young assistant and then stalking the streets, he becomes the perfect fabled "evil one" and is much loved as he dances and "scares" the receptive village of Cumana.

You can tell when the **Looters** are playing at Komotion. The air is

thick with anticipation, excitement, and it's a time to see old friends - the **Looters'** faithful - and initiate newcomers. April 8 was such a night and also featured the debut of the **Looters'** full length video of the **Flashpoint** album (directed by **Mary Liz Thomson**.) Although it wasn't quite finished the video presented a cascade of images - from war-torn Central America, to footage of Berlin, to uplifting, slice-of-life vignettes of S.F.'s Mission district, and the **Looters** performing and being interviewed. It's an impressive feat, especially for a shoe-string budget, and if you haven't seen it, copies are available for only \$15.

Equally amazing was the **Looters'** performance. They played exclusively new material--a challenge to both band and old fans--but there was never a doubt that the music was anything but great. The new songs range from mesmerizing soundscapes like "**Pavement of Bone**," to the sarcastic "**Titanic**," to the anthemic protest song, "**Jonny Refused**." Some people wonder how the **Looters** keep doing it, having struggled so hard for so many years, but when they hit the stage all questions disappear. This material is the best they've written and when the music is happening - that's all that matters!

see page 34



**Chuck Sperry APRIL 26 - MAY 28**

POLITICAL CARTOONIST. DOES CARTOONS FOR KOMOTION MAG. A COMBINATION OF ACRYLIC MODERN PAINTINGS AND COMIC STRIP ART TO SHAKE YOUR CONSCIENCE UP! YOU'RE HERE, LIKE IT OR DON'T--BUT DO SOMETHING DO SOMETHING!



# Letter from Mexico

*The following excerpt is from a letter sent to me from Margot Pepper, a writer and Komotion editor. It wasn't intended to be printed, but I thought others would appreciate her observations of Mexico, as well as her search for a lost childhood...*

The return to Mexico City--or "Mexico" as it's called--after 18 years has been more profound than I ever expected. Reconstructing corroded fragments of memory--reconciling my past and the present--my anguish with my ecstasy--death with rebirth. Old wounds healing; fade: so much old anger. Found more here than I expected to find in a lifetime. Light identity crisis: My body and mind were assembled in the U.S. of A, but my heart is stamped with the words "HECHO EN MEXICO." Finally, when people ask what am I, I say "un ser humano," (human being).

In Mexico City: museums, murals, culture, history, new friends, many anarchists traveling there, they liked Komotion. An English chap and squatter will send articles. He runs a center which teaches people how to break into and take over buildings. Another anthropologist/anarchist will send article (I hope) on the squatters movement in Mexico. The very poor have taken over entire sections or "Colonias" of land and developed them. Eventually the government legalizes the plots and houses and the squatters sell them to accumulate money to develop more land. So has the movement expanded. In ten years an entirely empty expanse of land sprung up into a busy city on the road to Cuernavaca! In Netzahualcoyotl, on the fringes of Mexico City, the dirt roads are clues of "Paracaidista" (or "Parachuters" as the squatters are called,) trails.

Netzahualcoyotl is by the main airport. It is where, by a miracle of luck, I found Lucia, the woman who raised me. Through her, much of my past and the truth has been revealed to me. Ironical and tragic that Lucia--my refuge and ally as a child should be so critical, even cruel to her own 14 year old son, Lalo. Lucia's situation is far worse than I imagined. She runs a pitiful juice stand in a suburban slum area. She often can't make the \$13,000 pesos or \$5/month rent. Most meals in restaurants here cost \$5,000 to \$13,000 pesos, to give you an idea. Her rent a month is equivalent to 13 soft drinks or 7, depending where you order one.

You think you know poverty from the films from pictures? Come, sleep in my bed for a night. Spend a night with the oily black fingers of poverty stroking your cheek, while the humid stench of the earth and the rotting walls begins to bury you, and the pack of watchdogs barking all night long downstairs begins to drive you mad. Then tell me how well you sleep.

Not more than three hours at dawn.

The lights are out.

"Look, Lucia...how pretty, there are stars."

"What stars," she laughs, "Those are the little holes in the sheet metal. But don't worry. When it rains, the water slides down the sides."

A night in Lucia's cinder block and black rusty sheet metal shack on the roof of a warehouse taught me the values of the peso. There, across the carretera from the airport and the junkyard and the rotting refuge from the market place, nothing washes clean. The cars and camionetas turn the corner of the dirt road, covering the people in their fresh work clothes with dust. There, running water is precious. A faucet in the stall by the toilet with a bucket under it for when the toilet needs flushing. No other sink. A shower head seldom yielding hot water. It would flood the bedroom anyway.

In spite of the poverty--poverty of the mind seems less in Mexico. There is music, there is humor, there is courtesy, and for the most part, common sense and compassion for one another. And always hope and the alegria of being alive. A breeze on a stifling still day--tacos from a street vendor--the animals in the zoo...a musician playing on a bus.

My first few days captive in the house of a repulsive young woman in the Lomas, or most affluent section of Mexico City, made Lucia's home seem like paradise. (The woman was the daughter of my mother's friend) The stay was like the Bunuel's "Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie." Fortunately an accident made me realize quickly that I had to escape. I had three tequilas my second night there plus the altitude=six. That night, got up to get water, fell, later fainted, woke up with neck so stiff I had to go to the hospital. (Pretty funny, huh?) Got the hell out of there after recovering and onto the Montecarlo Hotel in Center of town.

Experience in the Lomas taught me that the bourgeoisie everywhere have no culture other than the culture of consumerism. These folks would go to "Valle" every weekend to windsurf, hanglide, waterski, etc. They treated their servants like dogs, worked 10 hours a week and complained, and had 3 hours fancy luncheon dates together. The bourgeoisie everywhere are the same! Talk and dress and think the same!

...A birthday party for Lucia in the Montecarlo Lobby- rent money for her so she can move, a cake, rum, other shit for the kid, and a note that says she's won the lottery. My mother and I to go 50%-



50% to help her start a taqueria. We'll see how it goes. Odds against her (attitude). Too much to describe in a letter. Trying to help her get out of the city. She wants to live in Cuernavaca.

Oh Mexico, your skies are as white as the thick hands of death; they tighten around our throats and we are forced to run for air as fast and as far as we can--if we can.

After 3 weeks in Mexico: Frantic bus rides deep into the night. Second class, hundred degrees and still, standing room only. Bathed in perspiration, jiggling happily to the bumps in the road and the salsa on the driver's cassette player... because you're all going somewhere together.

Bad luck in Merida. Fled quickly to coast where found, on the Yucatan Peninsula, in the state of Quintana Roo--Playa del Carmen. Purely by accident, a rash decision at 9:00 PM. No where to go. Nowhere to go. Arrive in Cancun. Collect thoughts for a half hour. Look at my environment in horror. Hear the driver yell "Playa del Carmen." Run for it. Drive into the darkness with three young boys, the bus and the delicious wind to yourselves.

Don't give a fuck where you sleep when you arrive. See dirt roads, a bed. Greatful for a beautiful room that is like a cottage and incredulous at the swimming pool size bath tub. Long bath. You never dry off. The humidity is so thick. The heat smothers you. Where the fuck am I? You wonder.

Wake up in an airy cottage over looking the Carribean only a few meters away... In a small, small town with Palm tree thatched huts and where the streets have no name. Ruins all along the beach. Tulum, not far away.

Here in Playa I have found what I've been looking for all my life. Tranquility within. Never so content and greatful to be alive. Writing non-stop. Exquisite! This time alone. The people are wonderful. Few tourists. Paradise for a week or 10 days. (Hell tomorrow--as they say: "Pequeno el Pueblo, grande el infierno" Small town, large hell. "So hay que aprovechas"-- take advantage now.)

Convinced S.F. is the city for me. Feel so lucky to have all of you to come home to. For first time since I left Mexico, 18 years ago, I have a home to come back to. And people I consider my family.

## FROM JAIL THRU RAGE & HOPE INTO THE NIGHT

to light this poem  
i will need the necessary spiritual matches  
that we use to burn the cigarettes of cholera  
with eyes of blind evil  
we smoke away any expectation  
the mouth tight & the freezing bones  
rapping from the very root of our imprisonment  
a chant of isolation

coming from pretty inside  
with the rage of chains being dragged  
with cells of concrete cold  
& our handcuffed heart  
born to live alone  
but free  
dream the eternal escape of the bird blues  
a mocker  
heavy loud laughter  
a prisoner  
cool as reality

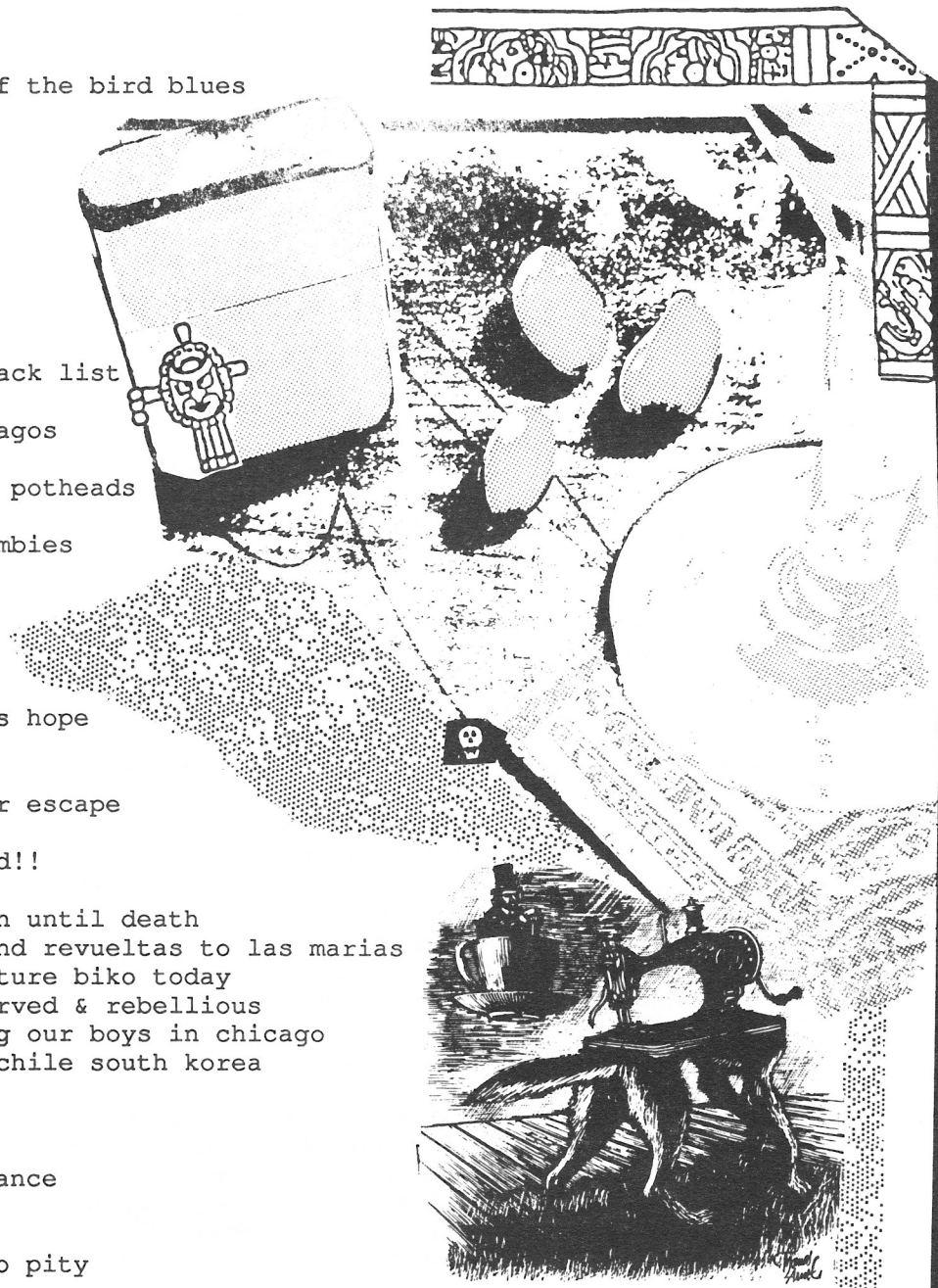
to strike away this poem  
i should tell you  
we are fresh  
a kind of tattooed history  
our sign forever on the black list  
we bad blood  
niggers spics flips japs dagos  
white trash fellows  
the alkies the junkies the potheads  
los punks los cholos  
the crack dudes the pop zombies

the rapist  
the killer  
the suicidal  
the system  
we smile with our toothless hope  
& say to you  
mr authority  
fuck you!! ... may we never escape  
but we dont eat your shit!  
don't you remember shithead!!  
you kill sacco & vanzetti  
you imprisoned flores magon until death  
how many times you will send revueltas to las marias  
how many times did you torture biko today  
the cananea miners are starved & rebellious  
when you gonna stop killing our boys in chicago  
gas tearing the crowds in chile south korea  
disappearing thousands  
mistreating the hooker  
beating the gay  
who care if there is no chance  
in the torturers zoo  
you stinky blackhole ass  
you are starved you have no pity

today  
into your night  
i bloody graffiti  
here it is  
a chant of anarchy against your chaos



Arnold O





# KOMOTION

Write to us at:  
KOMOTION INTERNATIONAL  
P.O. BOX 410502  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94141-0502

## MEMBER

Komotion is a cooperative, an alternative, an experiment . . . run by all-volunteer labor. We try to create an environment that inspires and informs. Besides being the home of some 40 musicians, who rehearse and record here, we have evening events that are adventurous and bring forward special talent. We have presented music of all kinds as well as poetry, performance art, films, video, dance, an art gallery, and hosted many benefits. A core of writers works on our often controversial magazine, which provides a forum for a debate around cultural and political issues. Komotion will also be putting out a record in October 1988, featuring music and spoken word performances.

### MEMBERSHIP

Komotion has a current membership of about 400 locally and another 100 or so internationally. At this point, our events are not "membership only," but becoming a member is an expression of support for a center of this kind. And on our tenuous budget, WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT to continue. Becoming a member means contributing money or something needed for the Klub's operation.

#### \$5 Membership

Includes a subscription to the Komotion magazine and schedules of monthly events that are mailed to you. Your Komotion card gets you a discount to all shows. This is good for one year.

#### \$50 Membership

Includes the above, plus free admission to all events for you and a guest for a year. Primarily, it is for people who want to (and are able to) more fully support our efforts. This makes you a "sustaining" member.

#### \$10 Magazine Subscription

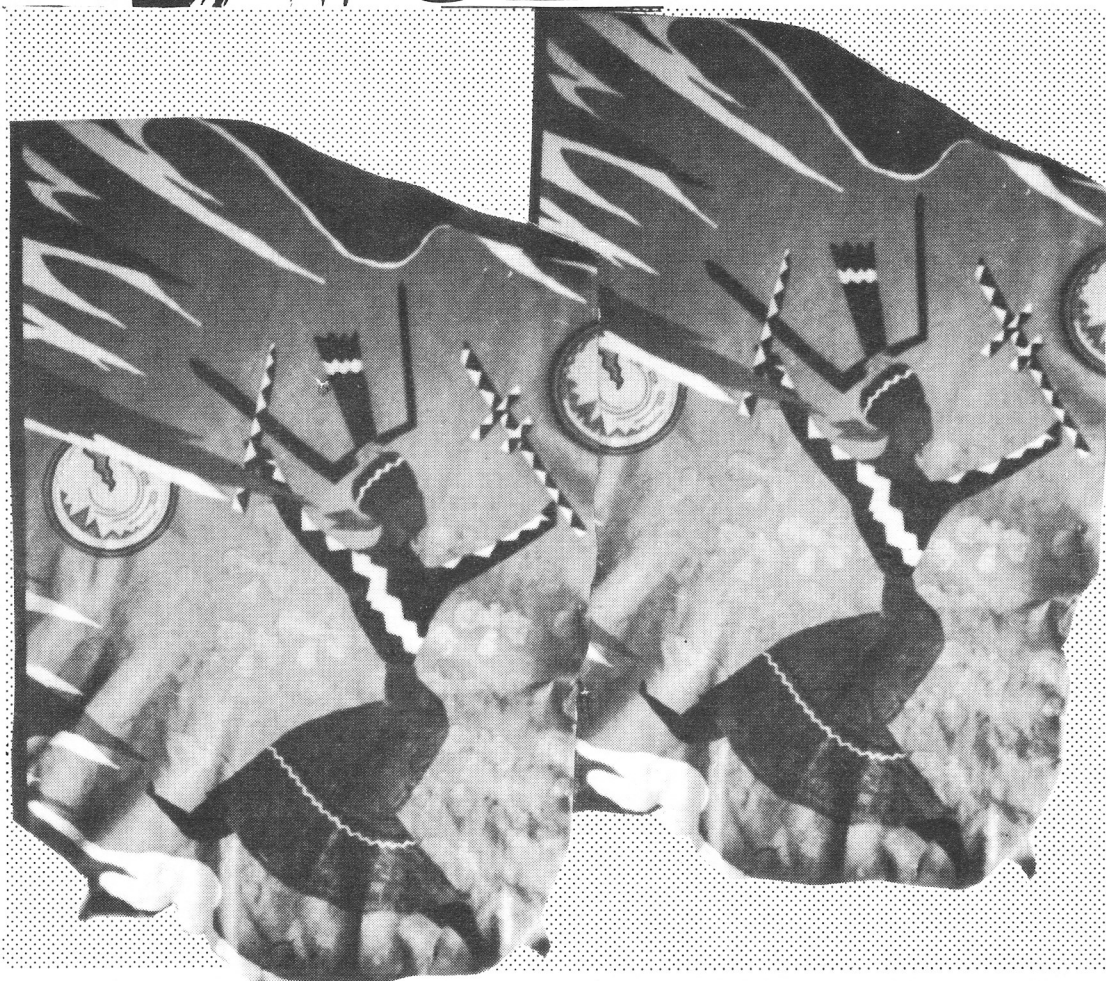
Outside the U.S. Please mail \$ in U.S. funds or international money order.

## INFO

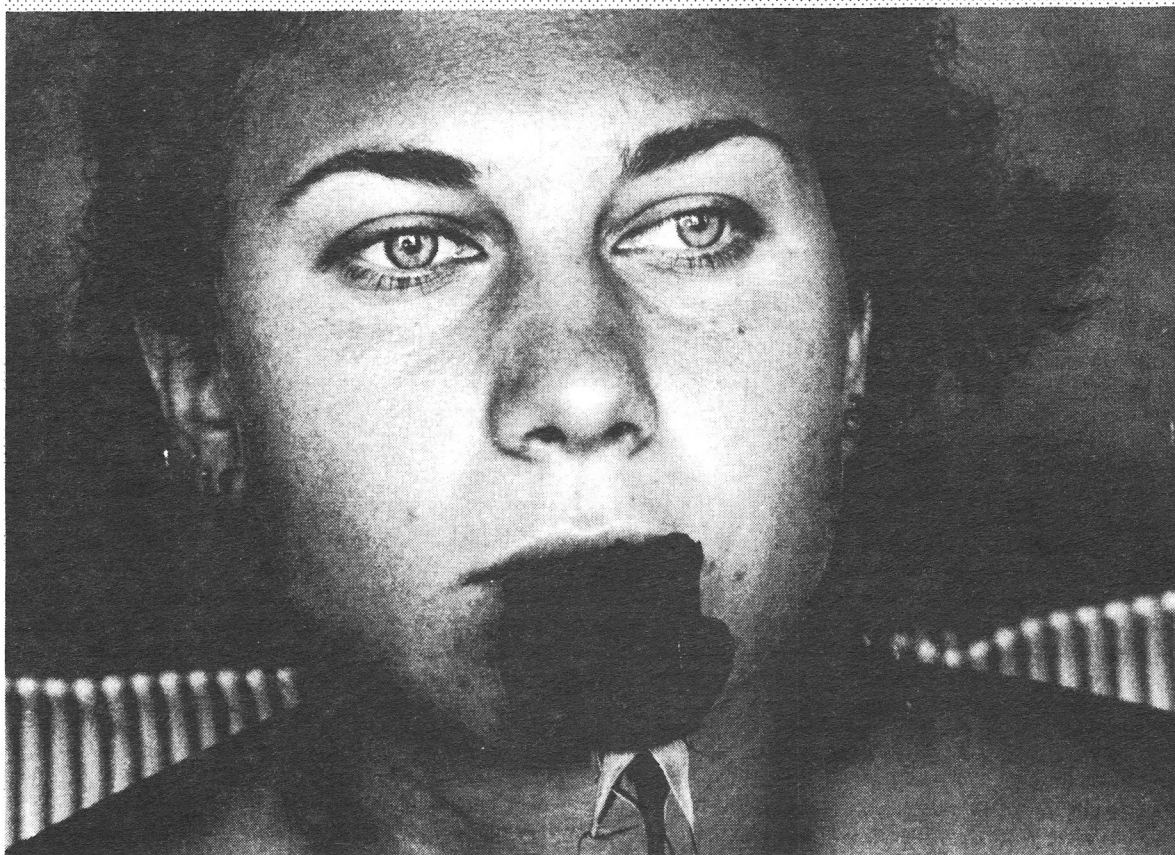
### HOW WE OPERATE

Komotion doesn't pay the performers, except to cover their expenses. The door charge, drinks, etc., are so low that we can only cover the rent and basic expenses from the parties. Even without pay, however, many new acts and established artists have chosen to perform here.

The actual scheduling of events, editing of the magazine, etc., is done by committee in a kind of anarchistic fashion. We find things to be livelier with as few rules and policies as possible.



Celest Conner "Vexation" MAY 31 - JUNE 25  
CHIRICAHUA APACHE CO-ORDINATOR OF KOMOTION  
ART-SPACE AND POETRY. MIXED-MEDIA WORKS COMBINING  
THE TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES OF NATIVE BEAD AND  
LEATHER WORK WITH MODERN ART ACRYLIC, PENS,  
PENCIL, COLLAGE, GLITTER, STUFF, WHATEVER...  
"IS" ART, AND "POLITICAL" ART... TO RAISE YOU,  
OR LEVEL YOU... BASH THOSE BARRIERS...



Jim Hendriksen JULY 26 - AUGUST 27  
HARSH REALITY... SENSITIVE... PHOTO ESSAY REACHES INTO YOUR  
GUT TO TURN YOU INSIDE OUT... HARM AND WHAT IT DOES TO EACH  
OF US. EVEN WHEN IT HAS LAIN DOWN TO DIE... NO ONE TALKS  
ABOUT IT... OR THE NIGHTMARES THAT ECHO... BEAUTIFUL BLACK  
AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY... THANKS JIMI

On April 12, Komotion Koffeehouse was graced by the presence of poets **Alphonso Texidor**, **Scott McLeod**, **Mark Taylor** and **Mark Spainhower**. Alphonso's rendition of a South African freedom poem stays in my memory. It was a poem about *choices* for a prisoner. You can choose to be beaten or commit suicide. You can choose to be thrown from the window or jump...

On April 22, a benefit was held for **Food Not Bombs**, a Bay Area organization that distributes free food in the park and around the city. FBN has been under attack from the "authorities" lately because they refuse to accept the "rules" involved with keeping people from starving. This seems to strike fear into the too-well fed, as it is constant reminder of the politics behind the homeless situation in our wealthy city. It's almost (but not quite,) laughable that laws restrict the distribution of free food without proper permits, while it is perfectly legal to die--unsheltered, unfed and uncared for--in the gutter. That's capitalism for ya! Thanks to suitably named bands, **Victim's Family**, **A Subtle Plague**, and **Swollen Boss Toad** for providing "sound" nourishment to the soul as well.

**Cantoamerica** came from Costa Rica for a three-week tour of the

the Bay Area. Truly a dance group, their material covered the range from salsa grooves to calypso to reggae-fied funky jazz. In a blend of political, carnival and indigenous elements came "Por Eso Canto," a song I'll never forget. They played Komotion on May 6 with **Po Go Bo** and two films, "**Lovejoy's Nuclear War**" and "**Abbie Hoffman: Orphan of America**." I'll try to share the event. In "Lovejoy's Nuclear War," a man knocks down a nuclear tower and proves in court that his actions were motivated by concern for human life. Initially ridiculed by the corporation, a local power conglomerate, their plan for a reactor is rejected by community consensus.

In the wake of Abbie Hoffman's death we ran "Orphan of America." He talks clearly of the choices one must make to resist the tendency of the business world and state to make the rules. See this film. It can't be explained. A member of the audience updated Hoffman Conspiracy Theory. **Po Go Bo** blasted the evening to a close, with **Jim Campilongo's** distinctive guitar moans, wails, shrieks and heaves bringing the emotion of the evening to a head, before letting the audience down gently with a little solo blues...

On May 10, Komotion hosted **The Black Wedge**, a touring group of

musicians and poets from Canada, the U.S. and England. **Sang** opened the show, (proving that anarchist music can actually be pretty and even technically proficient!) **Keith Jafrate** played sax and did spoken word along with **Rachel Melas** on bass. The music is melodic, improvisatory and it was great seeing an excellent female bass player. Keith's poetry is image laden, musical and also reads well on the page, as he has several books in print. **Peter Plate**, "an agent of the spoken word," presents the uncompromising underclass, full of anger, both directed outwardly and inwardly, via the suburban living room. **Mecca Normal**, from Canada, are a female vocalist and eclectic guitarist, who play thrashy, but innovative music, full of emotion and energy in the best tradition of punk/post-punk styles.

*Oh, J.R. "Bob" Dobbs, I have seen the light, I have felt the earth move and I am in love--with your faithful representative--the sexiest man to ever wear green polyester pants--Saint Janor Hypercleets1* (A true testimonial from a swooning female audience member...) **Saint Janor** graced Komotion with his presence on May 17, at a gathering of the **Church of the SubGenius**. Direct from Arkansas, he is the Master Trance Spouter, Over-prime Change-

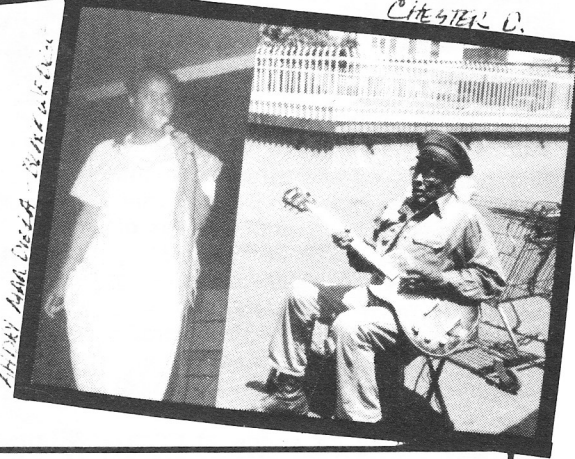


Channeler & All-round Hellsaint, preachin' the word of the founder. This is all true. A rapt audience was wrapped around his curiously mindshattering rap. It's all on tape, folks. It's not appropriate to quote the Master out of context, which is what we usually try to avoid thinking about. **The Band That Dare Not Speak Its Name** did, in fact, play. For a love offering you could find out what the JANOR DEVICE is; I'm not quite sure, I was hit in the head by somebody's shoe and had it removed from my neck with a roachclip by an ex-nurse with a moustache and tattoo on her navel. Thank you Vivian. Be at the next SubGenius event and it could happen to you, too.

Notes from the benefit for **Project Open Hand** on May 20: Food was great, as usual! Haute Cuisine for the Hoi Polloi! The **Bedlam Rovers** did a wild set to which people danced and shouted at...**Wanna Be Texans** were sweet harmony, fancy pickin' and great songs...**X-Tal** and **Muskrats** tore up the place with heads-up R&R (in the first case) and the craziest song selection I've heard in ages (in the second case)--**Trust Me** was incredible!!

Klubs Throughout the Bay Area took to the "feets" in what turned out to be a unified cry against Racism and Skin-Head Neo-Nazism on June 3. Klub Komotion was one! Starting off the night was **Linton Kwesi Johnson** starring in "Dread Beat an' Blood," then **Chester D.**, in the tradition of John Lee Hooker, captivated the audience with his solo blues performance. **Ogie Yocha** took to the stage, gracing Komotion with world-class Reggae grooves which really ROCKED the house. The evening came to a roar with Santa Fe's **Clown** and providing musical segues to the evening were 2 BAD DJ, Kayumangul and Brother Kadre.

We showed the video **First Strike: Portrait of an Activist** immediately after Katya Komisaruk's appeal was rejected. The court ruled that her actions in sabotaging a Naval Nuclear Computer were part of a planned conspiracy which included turning herself in. Any argument of conscience invoking the Nuremberg Principles was once more rejected. The benefit cafe on June 7 planned to let her know that creative people will support those who take actions of conscience. (Issue #2 provides some background.) Directed by Douglas Dibble, the video explores her background and the logic of her action. She brings up thoughts that must never cross the minds of the Masters of War: is our "superior speed of pre-



They don't want to see us unite" ~Bob Marley

is a **sat** **3 JUNE**

DOORS **8:30** OPEN

FILM FROM UK **9PM LKJ** A VOICE FROM BLACK BRITAIN

Linton Kwesi Johnson in **DREAD BEAT AN' BLOOD**

International Indian Treaty Council **UPDATE** the Eddie Hatcher Case

**LIVE MUSIC**

**Ogie Yocha**

**Chester D. Wilson** (Blues Guitarist)

**CLOWN** from the 'Southwest'

**Kultural Vibes** provided by KPFA/KLX

**DJ Kayumangul**

**Benefit \$5**

**@KOMOTION** 2779 16th St. SF (near Folsom)

**ROCK AGAINST RACISM**

**GUN CONTROL ISSUE**

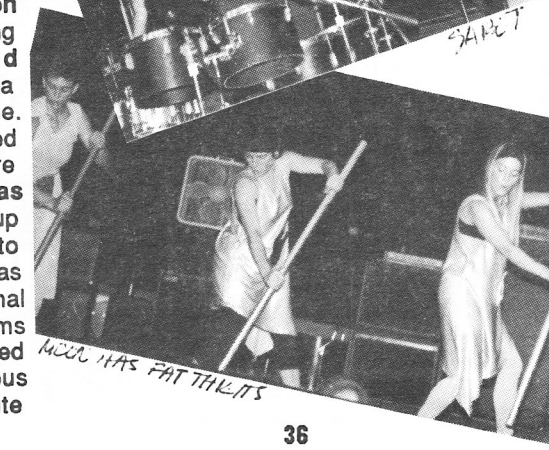
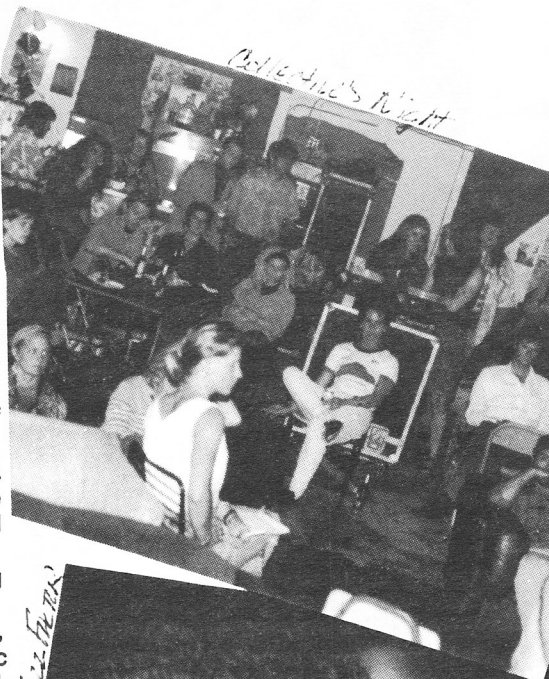
**ANTIRACISTS TRANSLUCENTLY WITH AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, BUT SPEAKING MASSACRE**



response ratio" an extension of Dodge City faster-draw mindset? ...After the film we had readings by **Kush** from *Cloudhouse* (**HIBAKUSHA**)...**Andrew Hayes** (*Stop Dropping the Bombs*)...**Francesca Duble** (*Her Winged Silence*)...**Sara Felder** (juggling handgrenades)...**Judi Friedman & Max Ventura** (Songs from the lives of Women alive/in struggle) ...The community supports the ones who have conscience, and we're getting them out of jail!

June 17 was the anniversary of the Soweto Massacre. The first set was a percussion event by **Order of Chaos**. Starting with an improvised jam, the rhythms started again after a dedication to "those who have the courage to struggle for freedom and win even when they die." **Order of Chaos** ended with an interesting variation on Burundi drumming. **FourHorsemen** played very hot, disturbing sounds filled with electronic drums, agonized/treated vocals and synthesizer patches from south of Silicon Valley. This music conveyed the feeling of falling off a ride at Coney Island during a thunderstorm/toxic waste spill. **Wasrael** played a flavorful set opening with the George Harrison song "The Inner Light"--"the further one travels, the less one knows." **Shido's** bass works with drums and vocals to form an exciting approach to strong, well-arranged material. The **Defectors** have been re-uniting to play a series of gigs around the area. Playing the final set of the night at Komotion, it seemed as if **JOSEPH & CO.** never left. The music was fresh-sounding & the band had a great time. No wonder they get asked to re-form by their fans. We'd like to thank all the people who contributed to this evening for doing a great job. All the best to **Fat Dog**, for his inspiration and relentless involvement with all manner of projects.

July 5 brought together collectives and collectively minded people in an event called, "**Without Bosses**." This high energy Wednesday night was informative, emotionally moving, and provocative. Presentations were made by **Studio 4**, a performance/live-in space, **Komotion** and **Rainbow Food Collective**, along with slide shows about **Diamond Youth Shelter** and **Maghuen**, a collectively run soup kitchen in Chile. An info table and video was provided by **Bound Together Books** and there was a performance by **The Moon Has Fat Thighs**, a women's theater group that deals with themes relating to present day feminist issues as well as ideas from Goddess and pre-patriarchal cultures. **Sabot**, a music duo of drums of drums and electric bass, performed intricate compositions with tremendous energy. Their non-stop, 30 minute



barrage consisted of incredible musical and emotional contrasts, communicating whole stories in sound.

The **Komotion 2nd Anniversary Party** was a high energy celebration with great music, dancing and a fantastic show of support! **World Entertainment War** went beyond burning money this time and, in fact, made a Dead President milkshake. (I heard it was pretty good, if a bit chewy!) Later, in exhorting the crowd to unfetter their minds and bodies, **Breszny** ended up taking it all off--nice bod, Rob! The music was great, too, by the way, and you should all go buy their recently released album. **Jonathon Byerly** opened the show with a solo performance utilizing delays to create live accompaniment. The crowd really enjoyed his unusual sounds, African rhythms, and jazzy tunes. **Fuzz Factor**, a rock band based around Shona marimba music, provided beautiful female vocals and peppy dance beats. And increasing the sweat factor were two funkay DJs, **Veronica Live** and **Black Stone**, they kept the dance floor full from early in the eve to early the next morn, until our feet were worn... Thanks to everyone for 2 YEARS!!!

A few words about Komotion's show on July 22 and the **Without Borders Anarchist Gathering**. What does it mean when we couldn't get any of our writers to cover this show? Like the Conference as a whole, it seems there were a lot of mixed emotions, frustrations, hopeful feelings and some let downs. Speaking as a person who is probably an anarchist (but prefers not to be an "ist" at all,) it seems as though the most positive aspect of the conference was simply the groping--people questioning, wondering, arguing, and creating a dialog. This battle over ideas is what truly revolutionary times must be like, (and when the 'groping' stops is when we're in trouble, no?) However, this condition was equally frustrating for those that wanted Action Now. But the experience of the Berkeley riot seems to show this "line" can come off pretty... dumb, as I haven't heard anyone talk about its purpose or what it accomplished.

Getting to the Komotion show, I think the same mixed feelings applied. Not to put down any of the bands (since there were some exciting performances by **Helios Creed**, **Mom**, **Schlism**, and **Thinking Fellers**.) but I was disappointed in the line-up being too much of a kind. Originally we thought there were musicians from all over the U.S. and internationally, that would perform, but that seemed to fall through. And then instead of being an event that could have been challenging through its diversity, unpredictability and its reach for some future aesthetic,

it became more of a punk show (even though a good one.) I guess the question is really--are all anarchists a bunch of white middle-class, suburban exiles who play loud and fast, or are there anarchists from the great American underclass of blacks, Hispanics and disillusioned whites, etc., and how are they expressing themselves? And what could *OUR* expression be?

Long awaited, **Jazz Exchange** on July 28 was an evening of great jazz-influenced music. Dark moon music from the **Ritual Band**: One by one the musicians take the stage, playing as they emerge from darkness. Swinging and blending screams with dreams, the music jumps from player to player. Soon they are playing "Mack the Knife", then "Tenderly". J.A. Deane punctuates the night with trombone cries, then the sound is quiet.

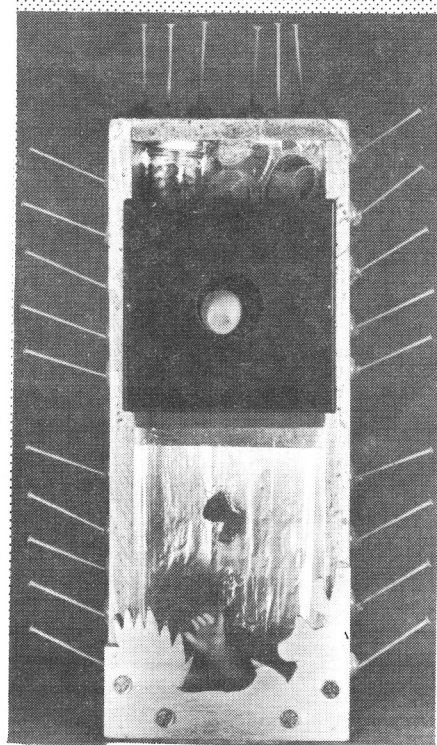
From Switzerland the **Tritones** came, thru New Orleans, leaving behind a broken bass and fine music. With mostly original compositions, they redefine the concepts of theme/variation/solo. Each musician leads and supports, with beautiful tone and balance. We'd love to have them back!

**Haven's Band!** Two basses, two drummers, two synths, two saxes and a poet. Once more, improvising on reggae and bop rhythms, taking "jazz" to new world places, heights of experimentation! Yes, Bitches Brew meets Eric Dolphy at the center of the world. These are the sounds that change the minds.

THE END!!!!!!!!!!!!



CELESTE/MIKEL DEHERTY



**Patricia Rodriguez JUNE 28 - JULY 23**

HISPANIC ARTIST IN THE NEW... PREPARED THESE EXPERIMENTAL WORKS ESPECIALLY FOR THIS SHOW (HAS BEEN CREATING POWERFUL BOX/STAGE/ALTER-TYPE PIECES FOR TEN YEARS.) THESE PAINTINGS REACH FROM THE CANVAS TO GET CHA'... ELABORATE CORRAGATED CARDBOARD, PLASTIC, ACRYLIC, FOUND OBJECTS... THIS IS TOMORROW SMASH THOSE DOORS, NOT PAST-TENSE-TENSE... EXPLORATION WORK!



# FILM REVIEW *Mapantsula*

(Directed by Oliver Schmitz, written by Thomas Mogotlane)



I'm here to tell you about a film which should have, and in fact has been distributed by the time this goes to press. I saw it at the S.F. Film Festival last March. I doubt, however, that it will go over very big with the sixth sense (dollars and sense, that is) of distributors to mainstream theaters.

*Mapantsula* (Thief), is written by Thomas Mogotlane, a black South African who gives an incredible performance as the protagonist, Panic. Panic is an irresponsible con-man who refuses to work. He survives by stealing and occasionally knifing those who get in his way. He succeeds in making life miserable for his "girl" by getting her fired from her job as a maid in a very bourgeois home owned by a young white woman a bit older than herself.

Although Panic is not very likeable at the start of the film, it is easy to understand why he turns to crime in a country where both the black person's dignity and future are sold for a ridiculous sum on a pay check. And the parallel between South Africa and life for blacks in the United States is brought home.

While Panic is in prison for one of his muggings, the warden peruses his criminal record, which reveals a long history, the punishment served by a mere few months here and there. Assault on a white man gets Panic a few years' sentence, but he is free within six months. The reason for these early acquittals is later revealed.

A seemingly apolitical character, Panic has never been involved in any sort of protest activities. Even while in prison he balks at the group of anti-apartheid activists who go on a hunger strike. His girlfriend, however, is politically active, which makes for a shaky relationship between the two of them. At one point Panic accidentally becomes entangled in a political situation involving his girlfriend. He later experiences the murder of his neighbor, a boy in his early teens, who had been in a demonstration. This heightens his anger and concern for the cause. He eventually becomes a true hero, transforming from the apathetic and selfish character at the start of the film.

Other characters are more typically heroic. Duma, the leader of the resistance in the township, is fighting for relief from the oppressive lifestyle which apartheid has created. When a meeting is organized to protest the rent increases, he tells the black Mayor:

"I call you Mayor because that is your title, not because we had anything to do with voting for you. Your promises are false. You have not born out a single commitment. Our situation does not concern you. You do not know what it is like to live without electricity in your well-furnished home bought by the fat government. They have made you rich and so it is in your interest to maintain this system of apartheid. So in our eyes I think, you are not our Mayor and you had better leave. We do not want you to represent us."

Does this remind you of any other government officials that you can think of? Hmmm..

Yet the film itself is not angry or didactic. Filmed surreptitiously under the guise of a gangster movie, with the aid of the Soweto township people and the African National Congress, *Mapantsula* is a slice of life. Every detail is revealing: Panic taking refuge from the police in an all black movie house which is showing a film of Kung Fu-style blacks beating up a white man; the nonchalance with which the people meet the police vans that constantly terrorize their township; and the way the people protest... always with the music of rhythmic body motion and song... This is assuredly one of the most brilliantly written and performed pieces of filmic literature I have ever experienced. It has been a while since a film has moved me so, and angered me and given me hope.

Margot Pepper



# BOOK REVIEW: *Homage to Catalonia*

(George Orwell)

Sandy Pleasants

History is, for the most part, fraught with misinformation and ideology. Take the Chinese government's reporting of the student uprising this year on Beijing, for example, or the Western media's version, for that matter. There are "facts" there, but they are only representations of fact, and vital information is omitted. George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, his book on the Spanish Civil War, allows history to be human, not an instrument for ideology. He presents his experience through his own biased eyes, and then admits that his information may be incorrect. It is doubtful that many other historians have taken this approach. Orwell doesn't give clear-cut explanations of what "happened." He only alludes to what may have happened, which is the only way to write about history. He has a definite opinion, tells us to not to trust it, then to explore other avenues besides his; so history is active, not just listening to stories. When reading about the war in Vietnam or Nicaragua, for example, why should we accept a one-sided account? That would be as foolish as accepting the official account of Tienanmen Square from either side. We should be given the information about *all* sides, set down as speculation, and be able to form our own opinions. This is what Orwell allows us to do.

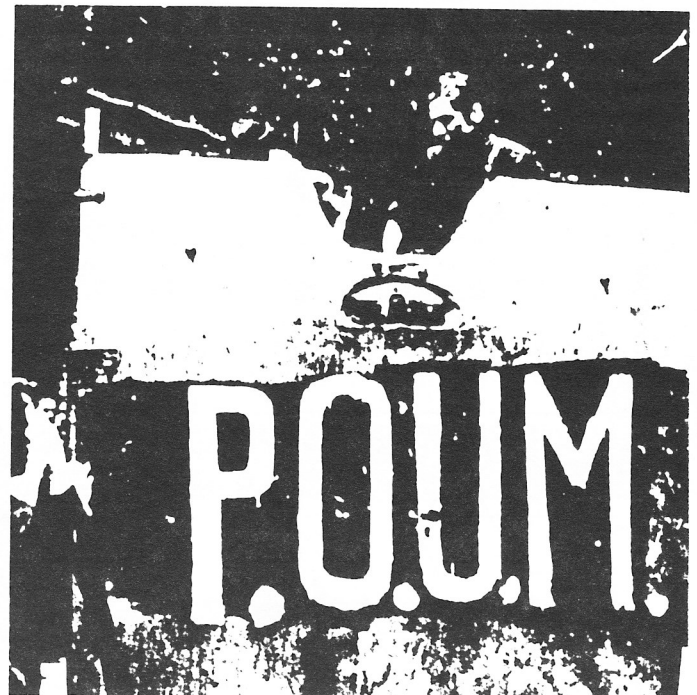
As a fighter in the war, he sees the many conflicts between the realities and ideologies. His party, the POUM, is fighting against the Fascist government, but so are several other parties with very different political beliefs. It is not just a matter of Communists against Fascists. It is Soviet-backed Stalinists, anti-Stalin Marxists, Socialists, and Anarchists, as well as other small factions, mostly labor or peasant groups with specific agenda--all fighting against fascism in Spain. He sees the irony of the factionalism when he says, "So great is the difference between two sets of initials!" referring to the POUM and the PSUC, the Marxists and the Stalinists.

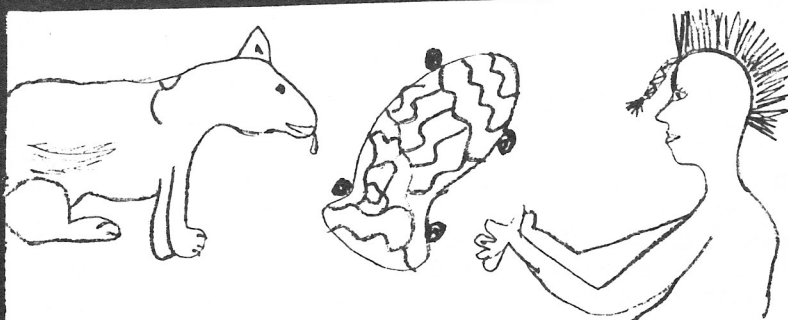
Orwell does not idealize his party. He says that at the time, he would rather have joined the PSUC, but because of his affiliation with the Labour Party back home he wound up in the POUM. He compares the propaganda of the POUM and the PSUC, denouncing them as equally dogmatic. The PSUC accuses the POUM of causing an uprising in Barcelona among the left to undermine the winning of the war, thus making the POUM allies of the Fascists. Instead of pointing the finger at the PSUC, Orwell takes a different approach. He presents various excerpts from the Communist press which covered this event. The clips contradict each other often, at times saying the POUM started the fighting, at other times blaming the Anarchists. He notes that the press tended to blame the Anarchists before the POUM, because the very word 'Anarchist' was synonymous with implication.

We see for ourselves the manipulation of even the radical press.

Orwell presents the others side's version of this historical event, and then gives his own account of the situation as he participated in it. Though he does have an obvious slant, (but who doesn't have a slant?) he explains it fully, and provides much background information. He even speculates about some members of the POUM being involved with the Fascists, but then questions his own accusations to cast a strong doubt upon it. Many all over the world believed this to be the case, including the New York Times, which disturbed Orwell a great deal; so much so that it compelled him to write a clearer, and it turns out, more truthful version of the war. He did not want to see the media's perversions of truth accepted in Europe and abroad. His alliance with a party that was later suppressed and silenced (many POUM members were arrested by the PSUC, and Orwell himself narrowly escaped such a fate) gave him first-hand understanding of such an entangled revolution.

In the last lines of the book he states, "...beware of my partisanship, my mistakes of fact and the distortion inevitably caused by my having seen only one corner of events. And beware of exactly the same things when you read any other book on this period of the Spanish war." This, in a nutshell, is the way to regard all chronicles of history, or news for that matter, which is already history by the time we know, no matter what the source.





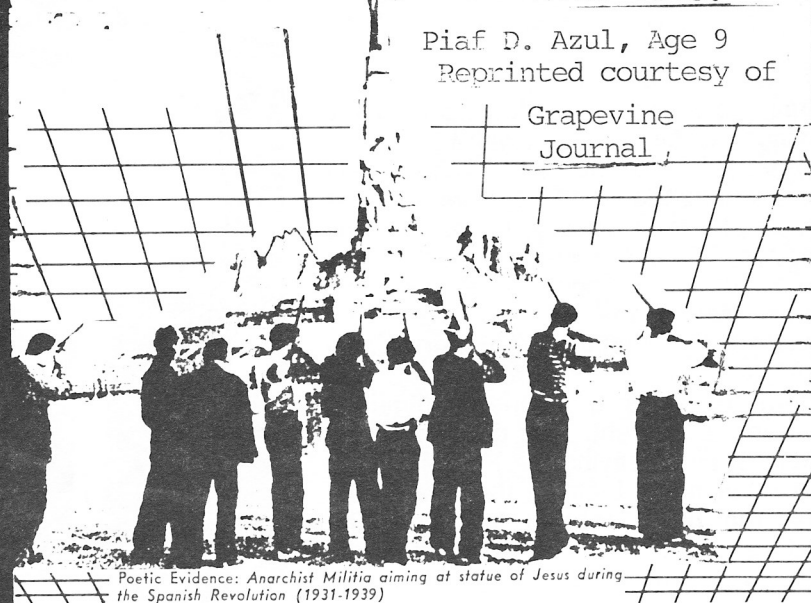
### ANARCHIST CONVENTION

A convention which adds lust to the city's inhabitants, the Anarchist Convention! Horace Mann Middle School hosted this convention. Inside they passed

out flyers, talked and put their luggage on the stage. Outside they made music, danced, skatboarded, talked played with: balls, dogs, and mostly had a good time.

Piaf D. Azul, Age 9  
Reprinted courtesy of

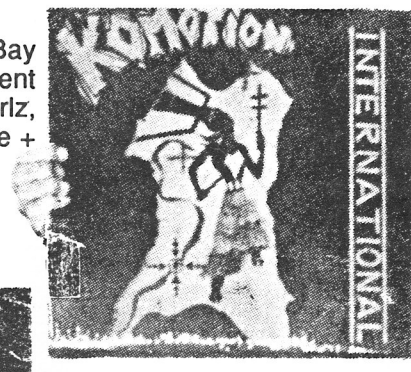
Grapevine  
Journal



Poetic Evidence: Anarchist Militia aiming at statue of Jesus during the Spanish Revolution (1931-1939)

## KOMOTION INTERNATIONAL (the album)

A collection of music and spoken word performances from some of the SF Bay Area's best! Diverse and provocative work by Alejandro Murguia, World Entertainment War, Po Go Bo, Penelope Houston, Peter Plate, Ogie Yocha, Snakewalk, Yeastie Girlz, Sister Double Happiness, Don Bajema, Beatnigs and Looters. \$7.00 LP or Cassette + \$2.00 shipping



## KOMOTION ANTHOLOGY

The complete set of newsletters (the precursor of this magazine) from March 1987 to May 1988. Also featuring art by Celeste Connor, Winston Smith and Tim Wicks, including color xerox. This book is 90 pgs., printed in a limited edition. \$10.00 + \$2.00 shipping

## KOMOTION Issue #2

Number 1 is sold out. A few number 2's are still available. Articles on the theme of culture and commerce, "fine art" and funk, "Hip" Pop and Power as well as poetry, record reviews and much, much more. \$2.00 + \$1.00 shipping

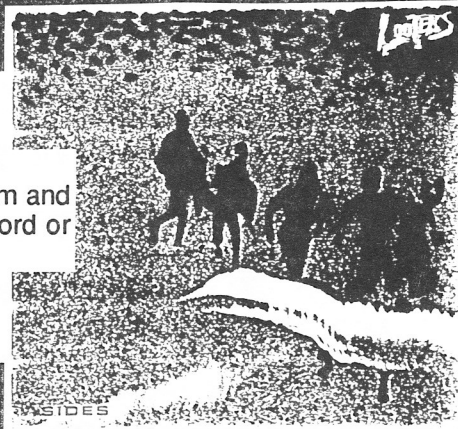


## YOUR SILENCE WILL NOT PROTECT YOU

90 minutes of innovative work by Black and North American Indian poets and performers -- the Beatnigs, Benjamin Zepenia, Jeannette Armstrong, Lee Maracle, Chuck D, Kateri Damm, Celeste Conner, Macka B, and many others. \$7.00 Cassette + \$2.00 shipping

## SIDES - Looters EP

Limited pressing from Raizer X Records including title cut in both short form and extended dance mix, Wrong Beach, Follow Me and Flag For Sunrise. \$7.00 record or cassette + \$2.00 shipping



## FLASHPOINT - The Video!

Directed by Mary Liz Thomson, this is a full-length visualization of the world at flashpoint with the Looters' LP as the soundtrack. Colliding images and interviews with the band and others makes for must viewing. \$15.00 + \$2.00 shipping

## FROM THE GALLERY

Should anyone wish to purchase any of the art shown at Komotion contact us and we'll put you in touch with the artist or artists.

## KOMOTION KATALOG

Write to us at:  
KOMOTION INTERNATIONAL  
P.O. BOX 410502  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94141-0502





Front/Back Cover: **Repression, the Ultimate Cure** by Richard Olsen

**\$ 2**